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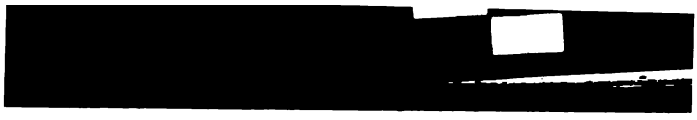


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THE REAL LINCOLN



THE REAL LINCOLN



THE REAL LINCOLN

A Portrait

BY

JESSE W. WEIK

WITH ILLUSTRATIONS



BOSTON AND NEW YORK
HOUGHTON MIFFLIN COMPANY
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TO MY WIFE

FOREWORD

Not long after the appearance of Herndon's Life of Lincoln, in the preparation of which I collaborated with the author, I was asked by the late Leonard Swett to visit him when I next came to Chicago. In due time I complied with the invitation. It was not long after I had called until our conversation turned on the Life of Lincoln which was then undergoing the test of popular approval. It was soon apparent that Mr. Swett greatly admired Herndon and he was generous and complimentary in his allusions to the book; but while he expressed the belief that Herndon, of all persons who had attempted to narrate the story of Lincoln's life, was best qualified to tell all the truth and had religiously tried to do so, yet he felt that in some respects, due probably to his advanced age, he had fallen short of his full task. Mr. Swett intimated that he had talked to certain other friends, to whom he purposed sending me, who knew Lincoln personally, and they coincided with his view. He mentioned Joseph Medill, Horace White, Henry C. Whitney, Leonard W. Volk, the sculptor, and Alexander Hesler, the photographer, all of whom I interviewed. In addition he took me to see Lyman Trumbull, and I listened with deep interest to their recollections of Lincoln and Herndon. Regarding the need, in view of his unusual opportunities, of fuller revelations from Herndon, Swett and Trumbull agreed with each other, but in certain other respects, notably their estimate of Lincoln, they were not in complete accord. Trumbull, I regret to say, mani-



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Photograph taken by Alexander Hesler at Lincoln's home in Springfield a few days after his nomination for President. Pronounced by Mr. Herndon to be the best and most lifelike portrait of Lincoln in existence. Reproduced by permission of Mr. George B. Ayres.

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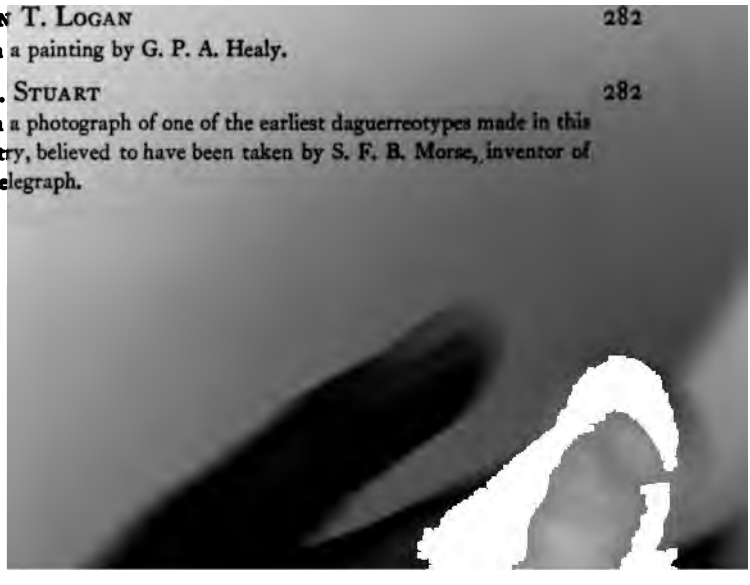
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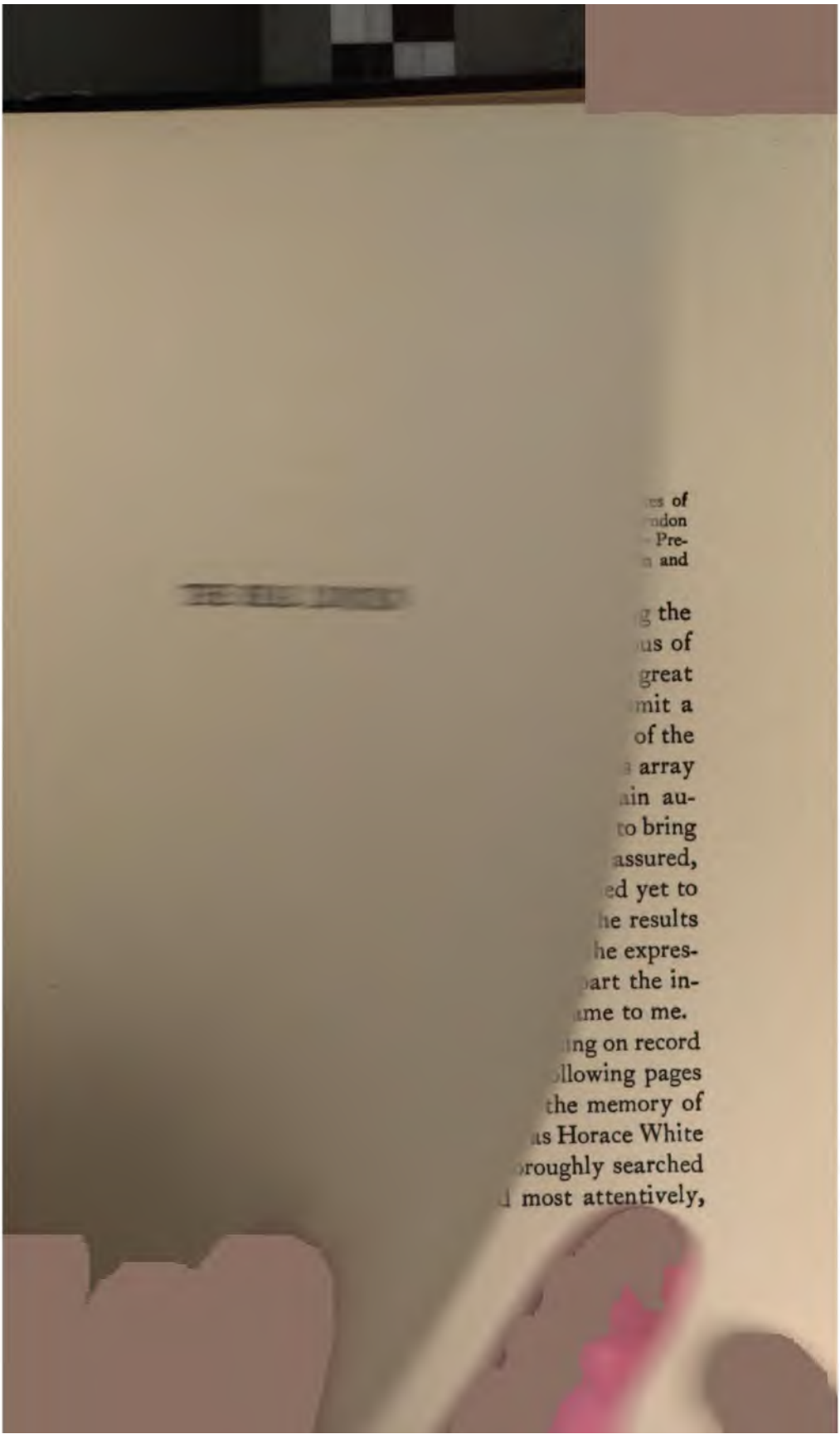
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THE REAL LINCOLN

CHAPTER I

Preliminary words — Beginning investigations at Springfield — Estimates of Horace White and Henry C. Whitney — Comparison of Lincoln and Herndon — Visiting places where Lincoln labored — Conference with Herndon — Preparing "The True Story of a Great Life" — Description of the Lincoln and Herndon library — Dismantling the law office.

ABRAHAM LINCOLN is rapidly nearing his place among the fixed stars; but before he is borne aloft in the nimbus of immortality which invariably overtakes a deservedly great and illustrious character, I feel emboldened to submit a few incidents gathered by me during a patient study of the man's history covering almost half a century. This array of material, including facts emanating from certain authentic and trustworthy sources, will, I hope, serve to bring out in sharper outline that portrait which, we are assured, some great artist, set apart for the task, is destined yet to produce. In thus acquainting the public with the results of my investigations I shall endeavor to avoid the expression of my own opinions, being content to impart the information as nearly as I can in the shape it came to me.

To begin with I do not feel justified in putting on record the facts and conclusions outlined in the following pages without first paying a merited tribute to the memory of William H. Herndon, who, of all persons, as Horace White has so fittingly observed, has "most thoroughly searched the sources of Lincoln's biography and most attentively,

intelligently and also lovingly studied his character. He was generous in imparting his information to others. Almost every Life of Lincoln published since the tragedy at Ford's Theater has been enriched by his labors. He was nine years the junior of Lincoln. Their partnership began in 1843 and it continued until it was dissolved by the death of the senior member. Between them there was never an unkind word or thought. When Lincoln became President, Herndon could have had his fortunes materially advanced under the new Administration by saying a word. He was a poor man then and always, but he chose to remain in his more humble station and to earn his bread by his daily labor."

I can conceive of nothing more significant and illuminating than the following estimate of Herndon by one who was his associate at the bar and who, for upwards of thirty-five years, maintained with him the most intimate relations. In a letter to Herndon this gentleman — the late Henry C. Whitney, of Urbana, Illinois — says: "You saw Lincoln as he was and know him far better than all other living men combined. Armed with such knowledge it follows that you know better than others how to delineate him. You have the acuteness of vision that we attribute tc Lincoln; you acquired much of his analytical power by attrition and you thought deeply as he did. He had unbounded confidence in your intuitions and your adhesion to him. I shall never forget the day — January 6, 1859 — when the legislature of Illinois met in joint session and elected Stephen A. Douglas, instead of himself, to the United States Senate. I went to your office and found Lincoln there alone. He appeared to be somewhat de-



WILLIAM HENRY HERNDON

jected — in fact I never saw a man so depressed. I tried to rally his drooping spirits and thus extract all the comfort possible from the situation, but with ill success. He was simply steeped in gloom. For a time he was silent; finally he straightened up and thanked me, but presently slid back into his chair again, blurting out as he sank down, 'Well, whatever happens I expect every one to desert me now, but Billy Herndon.'"

As has been truthfully said, it was his unwavering and inflexible devotion to the truth that formed the predominating trait in the character of William H. Herndon. In this respect he resembled his illustrious law partner. Both men up to a certain point were very much alike; but there was a difference. Lincoln, deeply cautious and restrained, was prone to abstract and thoughtful calculation. Herndon, by nature forceful and alert, was quick, impulsive, and often precipitate. If he detected wrong he proclaimed the fact instantly and everywhere, never piling up his wrath and strength, as Lincoln did, for a future sweeping and telling blow. He never stopped to calculate the force, momentum, or effect of his opposition; but fought at the drop of the hat, and fought incessantly, pushing blindly through the smoke of battle until he was either hopelessly overcome or stood exultant on the hilltop of victory. Younger than Lincoln he was more venturesome, more versatile, perhaps, and magnificently oblivious of consequences.

Conscious of his limitations Herndon knew that he was too radical and bold to achieve success in politics and he therefore sunk himself in the fortunes of his more happily poised partner. In the end posterity will accept the verdict

of Herndon's friends that, despite his faults, he was a noble, broad-minded man; incapable of a mean or selfish act, brave and big-hearted, tolerant, forgiving, just, and as true to Lincoln as the "needle to the pole."

Early in the seventies I opened up a correspondence with Herndon which ended only with his death and is represented by over five hundred pages of his manuscript now in my possession. After my graduation from college I journeyed from my Indiana home to Springfield to see him, and was so fascinated by his recital of Lincoln's life and activities that I adopted his suggestion and decided to remain there. For almost four years I traced Lincoln's footsteps viewing him from almost every possible angle. My researches were both continuous and painstaking; nor did I think of desisting until I had interviewed or communicated with almost every person then living in that region who had known or talked with Lincoln.

Shortly after my first meeting with Herndon, he piloted me to the dingy back room on the second floor of a store building facing the Court-House Square in Springfield which had sheltered him and his illustrious partner when they used it for their law office. "Here," he said, "is where we expounded the law to our clients, prepared our papers and charged up our fees." The room and furniture were strictly in keeping with the modesty of their fees. In the center was a table, leaning against the wall was an old sofa or lounge, and on the opposite side of the room stood the bookcase. An old wood-burning stove and four or five chairs completed the outfit. The bookcase contained not to exceed twenty volumes and of this number scarcely half were law books, the others miscellaneous,

partly literary and partly official, and statistical reports. After a few hours spent in the old law office, Herndon took me to a room over another store building in an adjacent square where, as he related, Lincoln wrote his first Inaugural Address. The store-room below was occupied by Lincoln's brother-in-law, Mr. C. M. Smith, who conducted therein a dry-goods store. We were shown the table on which Lincoln did his writing and even the inkstand which, it was said, he had used. It was on this occasion that Herndon told me the story of the preparation by Lincoln of this, his first official document as President. Having but few books at his home Lincoln asked Herndon to procure certain volumes that he might consult them while he was at work preparing the Address. Herndon told me he was expecting a request for numerous books and pamphlets, but was surprised when Lincoln furnished him the list. It consisted of only four items: Jackson's proclamation against Nullification; Clay's famous speech on the Compromise of 1850; Webster's reply to Hayne, and a copy of the Constitution.

After visiting several points of interest in and about the court-house, Herndon and I returned to the law office where we spent the rest of the day. Lincoln had been but a few years in his grave so that the story of the association of himself and his partner, as it came from Herndon's lips, was a most vivid and entertaining recital. From this time forward I was destined to share to the end of his days the confidence and friendship of this rare and interesting man. From Herndon it was decreed I should learn what manner of man Lincoln was, how to measure him, to dissect his moral structure, to analyze his mental processes. I soon

realized that no other man lived who comprehended so thoroughly the great character whose life I was trying to solve, who had dug so deeply and laid bare the springs of action, the motives that animated that clear head, brave heart, and strong right arm. It was plain that Herndon with implicit faith and fanatical devotion clung to Lincoln, and it therefore requires but little evidence to convince us that the latter, throughout the memorable and tempestuous times that made him great, bared his heart and soul to "Billy" Herndon.

In due time Herndon confided to me his plans. He had decided to relinquish the practice of law and move to the country. Once there, it was his purpose to write a number of articles for publication in a newspaper or magazine describing the youth and early manhood of Lincoln. Being somewhat infirm, as well as without experience in the art of narrative composition, he proposed that I should assist him and thus, by our joint efforts, we might produce a contribution to history the world would accept. After some reflection I decided to collaborate with him, but, later, when he had revealed to me the bountiful store of information he had accumulated, the project in my judgment began to broaden both in scope and importance. With the material already at hand and more of a like nature almost as accessible, I felt warranted in believing that a more interesting and pretentious work than a few columns of the regulation newspaper or magazine compilations of that period would be welcomed by the public, and I so insisted to Herndon. I was therefore not a little gratified a few days later when he announced that, after due deliberation, he had come around to my way of thinking.

Having determined to retire to the country he then asked me to help him classify and rearrange his papers, remove books, furniture, and other belongings — in short, dismantle the office generally. Although only preliminary to the details of research, verification, and composition, which were to engross our attention for the ensuing three or four years, I was soon made to realize that our joint labors had just begun. It only remains to add that, eventually, after a severe test of our zeal, vigor, and endurance, the time came when we were privileged to toss into the lap of an anxious and indulgent world three small volumes, depicting the life and achievements of Abraham Lincoln, under the significant if not euphonious title: "The True Story of a Great Life, by William H. Herndon." It may not be out of place to state here that prior to this, Ward H. Lamon had begun a "Life of Lincoln" obtaining from Herndon copies of numerous letters and papers which he was allowed to use. In the preparation of his manuscript Lamon was greatly aided by Chauncey F. Black, of Pennsylvania; in fact, as related by Herndon, Black really performed the better part of the work.

Elsewhere, in enumerating the contents of the Lincoln and Herndon law office, I have mentioned the bookcase standing against the wall on the north side of the room. It really surmounted a desk or table in which there were two small drawers, the whole being about eight feet high. There were five shelves; books occupied the lower three and those above were filled with a profusion of pamphlets, letters, and legal documents. Judging by the accumulation of dust which had settled on them Herndon's observation that the majority dated back to Lincoln's time was

an unnecessary deduction. On the floor near by stood a wooden box into which Herndon explained he had been placing papers of his own as well as matter concerning Lincoln which he had gathered since the latter's death. On the top of the bookcase I noticed a pasteboard box. It was eighteen or twenty inches square and was minus a lid. At the suggestion of Herndon I mounted a chair, lifted the box from the place where it had evidently reposed for many years and passed it down to him. After removing the layer of dust which effectually covered it, he proceeded to explore its contents, remarking that it was a box Lincoln had used. It was filled with letters and papers tied in bundles. One package he withdrew and untied. Beneath the string was a paper label about five inches long containing these words in Lincoln's unmistakable and legible handwriting: "*When you can't find it anywhere else look into this.*" It was a collection of miscellaneous material set aside by Lincoln. Among other things it contained numerous letters written to Lincoln during the campaigns of 1856 and 1858, some of which Herndon read and commented on for my benefit; but the item which awakened his deepest interest was a couple of printed sermons, opposing the extension of slavery, delivered by Theodore Parker of Boston in the summer of 1858. Herndon told me that these pamphlets were sent to him by Parker and that he was so deeply impressed by them that he turned them over to Lincoln. The latter folded and carried them in his pocket to read. "That he did read them," said Herndon after he had opened the package, "is shown by the fact that he endorsed them by marking several paragraphs with his pen." He then called my attention to two para-

graphs around which Lincoln had drawn his pen. In one of them Parker said: "Democracy is direct self-government, over all the people, for all the people, by all the people." In another place which Lincoln had underscored he said, "Slavery is in flagrant violation of the institutions of America — direct government, over all the people, by all the people, for all the people." Herndon insisted it was from this source that Lincoln drew the inspiration for the closing paragraph of his famous Gettysburg Address.

The limitations of time and space forbid a more extended description of the Lincoln-Herndon office, but I can hardly omit mention of another reminder which Herndon uncovered. When he was nearing the bottom of the box containing the array of miscellaneous matter just referred to, he withdrew from its depths a small leather-covered book about six by four inches in size, the two lids being fastened together with a brass clasp in front. After glancing through it for a few moments he gave it to me, saying as he placed it in my hands: "Here is the most important item in this entire collection. It reminds me more vividly of Lincoln than anything else we have thus far encountered. I am going to turn this over to you and I trust you will appreciate and preserve it, for, in its pages, you will find carefully stored all the ammunition Mr. Lincoln saw fit to gather in preparation for his battle with Stephen A. Douglas." He then explained that seeing the contest of 1858 approaching, Mr. Lincoln took this book, originally a blank book which had been used by himself and his partner to keep track of matters which concerned their business in the Supreme Court, and proceeded to paste on its pages newspaper clippings, tables of statistics,

extracts from Judge Douglas's speeches, and other data bearing on the great and absorbing questions of the day. "When this little storehouse of political information was filled," observed Herndon, "Mr. Lincoln fastened the clasp, placed the book in his coat-pocket there to repose during the campaign and to be drawn upon whenever the exigencies of debate required it."

The book contained in the neighborhood of one hundred and eighty-five clippings, and the paste or mucilage used by Lincoln which had permeated the paper was so dark that it, in some cases, made the printed portions opaque and almost illegible. Among other things, Herndon called my attention to the order or arrangement of the material, contending that it was not only significant, but also decidedly Lincolnian. The first item, which was pasted on the inside of the front cover, was the second paragraph of the Declaration of Independence beginning with that immortal pronunciamento: "We hold these truths to be self-evident: that all men are created equal; that they are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights; that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness."

Lower down on the same page was this paragraph from a speech by Lincoln's great political exemplar, Henry Clay: "I repeat it, Sir, I never can, and never will, and no earthly power will make me vote, directly or indirectly, to spread slavery over territory where it does not exist. Never while reason holds her seat in my brain — never while my heart sends the vital fluid through my veins — NEVER."

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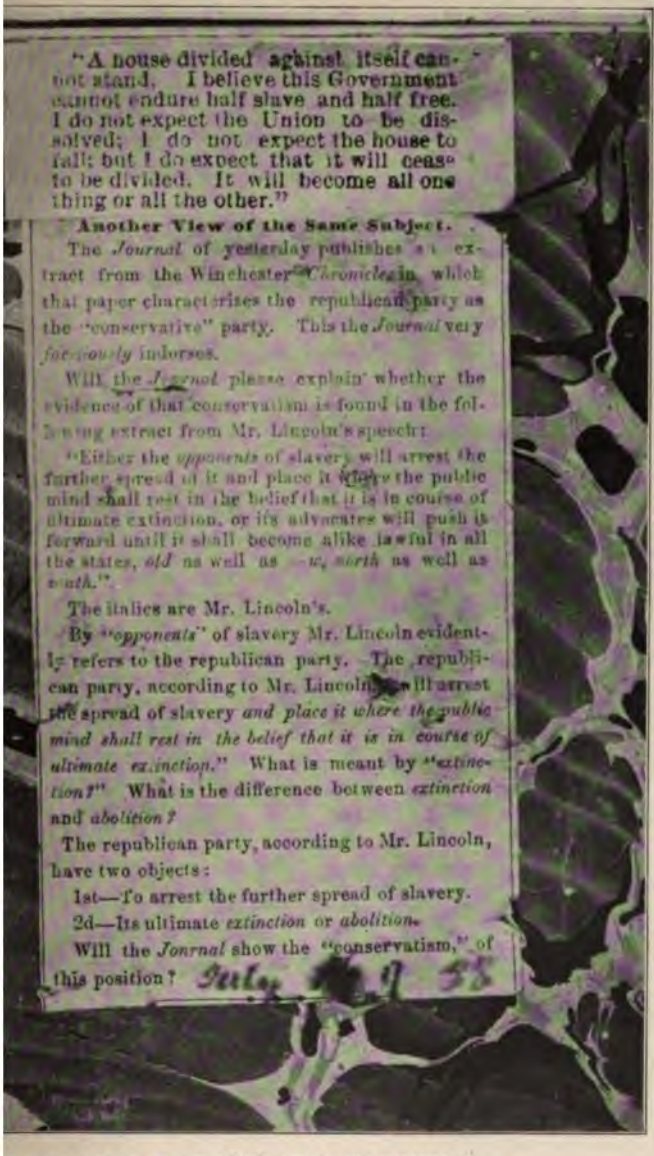
Two Interpretations.

The Chicago Times says the Declaration of Independence is an old instrument, and a cherished document. For over eighty years it has received the commendation and applause of all men who have read or heard it read. Since the exigencies of the black republican party has required the elevation of the negro to political equality with the white man, political doctors of that party have undertaken to give it new interpretations. We propose to state, first, the Declaration of Independence as adopted by congress, in 1776, and then, as succinctly as possible, the interpretations placed upon it by the democratic and black republican party. The second paragraph in the Declaration of Independence reads as follows:

"We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal; that they are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights; that among these are life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. That to secure these rights, governments are instituted among men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed; that whenever any form of government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the right of the people to alter or to abolish it, and to institute a new government, laying its foundation on such principles, and organizing its powers in such form as to them shall seem most likely to effect their safety and happiness. Prudence, indeed, will dictate that governments long established should not be changed for light and transient causes; and, accordingly, all experience hath shown, that mankind are more disposed to suffer, while evils are sufferable, than to right themselves by abolishing the forms to which they are accustomed. But when a long train of abuses and usurpations, pursuing invariably the same object, evinces a design to reduce them under absolute despotism, it is their right, it is their duty, to throw off such government and to provide new guards for their future security."

"I repeat it, sir, I NEVER CAN, AND NEVER WILL, AND NO EARTHLY POWER WILL MAKE ME VOTE, DIRECTLY OR INDIRECTLY, TO SPREAD SLAVERY OVER TERRITORY WHERE IT DOES NOT EXIST. NEVER, WHILE REASON HOLDS HER SEAT IN MY BRAIN—NEVER, WHILE MY HEART SENDS THE VITAL FLUID THROUGH MY VEINS—NEVER!"

LINCOLN'S POCKET SCRAPBOOK CARRIED D



"A house divided against itself cannot stand. I believe this Government cannot endure half slave and half free. I do not expect the Union to be dissolved; I do not expect the house to fall; but I do expect that it will cease to be divided. It will become all one thing or all the other."

Another View of the Same Subject.

The *Journal* of yesterday publishes an extract from the Winchester *Chronicle*, in which that paper characterises the republican party as the "conservative" party. This the *Journal* very *facetiously* indorses.

Will the *Journal* please explain whether the evidence of that conservatism is found in the following extract from Mr. Lincoln's speech:

"Either the *opponents* of slavery will arrest the further spread of it and place it where the public mind shall rest in the belief that it is in course of ultimate extinction, or its advocates will push it forward until it shall become alike lawful in all the states, *old* as well as *new*, *north* as well as *south*."

The italics are Mr. Lincoln's.

By "*opponents*" of slavery Mr. Lincoln evidently refers to the republican party. The republican party, according to Mr. Lincoln, will arrest the spread of slavery *and place it where the public mind shall rest in the belief that it is in course of ultimate extinction.*" What is meant by "*extinction?*" What is the difference between *extinction* and *abolition?*

The republican party, according to Mr. Lincoln, have two objects:

1st—To arrest the further spread of slavery.

2d—Its ultimate *extinction* or *abolition*.

Will the *Journal* show the "conservatism" of this position? July [illegible] 58

THE CAMPAIGN OF 1858 AGAINST DOUGLAS

from the Clay speech, Lincoln had inserted a portion of the opening paragraph of his famous speech delivered before the Republican State Convention which met in Springfield and nominated him as their candidate for United States Senator, June 16, 1858. It was in this speech he gave utterance to the doctrine that, so long as the slavery agitation was allowed to continue, this nation like "A house divided against itself cannot stand."

Part of this clipping included the comments of the local papers on the speech, but Lincoln chose the editorial notice, not of his own party's organ, the "Springfield Journal," but that of the "State Register," the opposition paper. He noted the date of its publication on the margin with pen and ink, and it doubtless served as a text for certain of his arguments during the campaign. With one exception the remaining portion of the material in the book is not especially noteworthy. That exception is an extract from an editorial printed in an Alabama newspaper — the "Muscogee Herald." It doubtless made something of an impression on Lincoln, for he had taken the precaution to record on the margin of the page the date of its appearance in the paper: August 7, 1856. It read as follows:

Free society! We sicken of the name. When it is but a conglomeration of greasy mechanics, filthy operatives, small-fisted farmers, and moon-struck theorists. All the Northern and especially the New England States are devoid of society fitted for well-bred gentlemen. The prevailing class one meets with is that of mechanics struggling to be genteel and small farmers who do their own drudgery, and yet who are hardly fit for association with a Southern gentleman's body servant. This is your *free society* which your Northern hordes are endeavoring to extend into Kansas.

Mr. Herndon smiled when he encountered this rank specimen of Southern journalistic expression. "Imagine the satisfaction," he exclaimed, "with which Mr. Lincoln, when he was addressing a crowd of greasy mechanics and small-fisted farmers who had emigrated from Ohio, Pennsylvania, and New York in quest of cheap homes, must have read this vivid and satirical allusion to the free society of the North. No wonder Douglas winced and threatened vengeance when he could get Lincoln 'down into Egypt' — in other words, southern Illinois."

CHAPTER II

Lincoln's birth in Kentucky — Visiting his birthplace — Some of his early playmates — Interviewing Austin Gollaher and others at Hodgenville and Elizabethtown — Dr. Rodman's visit to Washington — Recollections of the artist Rowbotham — The removal to Indiana — Lincoln's schooling there — Incidents of his boyhood — Association with Dennis Hanks — Cutting wood at Posey's Landing — Letters of Dennis Hanks to Herndon.

Of his life in Kentucky Lincoln usually had but little to say; presumably, of course, because there was so little of it. Before he reached his ninth year his family had moved to Indiana, and although, in later years, he visited Louisville, Lexington, and possibly Frankfort, there is no evidence that he ever saw his birthplace or the scenes of his childhood in Kentucky again. When his nomination for President by the Chicago Convention in 1860 gave him national prominence, almost forty-five years had elapsed since his departure from Kentucky, and it is, therefore, not surprising that many of the people in the region where he was born were at a loss to determine who he was or whence he sprang; nor, during the few remaining years of his life, was the question of his exact identity and family descent, in the minds of some of these people, entirely free from obscurity and doubt.

For what we really know about Lincoln's birth and boyhood in Kentucky we owe more to the foresight and persistence of William H. Herndon than to any one else. Scarcely a month had elapsed after the tragedy at Ford's Theater, in April, 1865, before Herndon had set out for Kentucky and southern Indiana and begun an investigation so vigorous, conscientious, and exhaustive that

the world will always be deeply in his debt. He was the first man on the ground and likewise the first man to meet and examine the few material and competent witnesses of Lincoln's advent into the world still living. He pursued his researches with rare vigilance and assiduity, toiling incessantly; nor did he cease his labors until he had dug to the very bottom in his search for the truth. Later, in compliance with his generous suggestion, I followed him, traversing the same path and visiting the same localities; and although I labored to the limit of my zeal and endurance I was never conscious of having added materially to the store of information he had already accumulated; nor of encountering anything of a valuable or interesting character which he had not unearthed himself. The truth is the field was so barren of material neither of us could gather much that was significant or trustworthy; but we consoled ourselves with the reflection that we had, to the point of exhaustion, explored every avenue that led to accurate or intelligent information.

Only four persons could be found who really knew and remembered Lincoln in Kentucky. One was Austin Gollaher, who was still living when I visited Larue County, and who seemed to have retained a more or less vivid recollection of his early playmate; but he was then well advanced in years and had already begun to view the past through the rosy mist of an old man's memory. About the only noteworthy thing he appeared to be able to recall was the published incident of his rescue of the boy Lincoln from the waters of Knob Creek into which he had fallen while trying to "coon" across that stream on a log. Another man — one met by Herndon — who knew Lincoln

in Kentucky was John Duncan, a Baptist preacher, at that time in charge of Little Mount Church, the same church to which Thomas and Nancy Lincoln had belonged. One of the adventures in which both he and young Abe had leading parts — and I copy from the account in Duncan's handwriting, furnished to Herndon in 1865 and now in my hands — was this:

"Abe was very determined in pursuit of game, as an instance which I now recall will prove. He and I one day ran a ground-hog into a hole in the rocks. We worked a long time in an effort to get him out, but I finally became tired and gave up. Lincoln, however, ran to a blacksmith shop not far away and got the blacksmith to make a hook and fasten it to the end of a pole. The man came back with Abe and together they finally hooked the animal out of the hole."

Two other intelligent and dependable witnesses in Kentucky were interviewed by Herndon, both of whose statements or recollections in their own handwriting, turned over to Herndon in the summer of 1865, are still preserved. They were Presley Haycraft and John B. Helm. The first named, who was a brother of Samuel Haycraft, clerk of Hardin County, was a copyist in the latter's office. He was older than Lincoln and claimed to remember him well. He described him as a little "shirt-tail boy" in Elizabethtown who could be seen about the court-house and stores clinging closely to his mother's skirt. The fourth witness was John B. Helm who was a clerk or helper in his uncle's store, also in Elizabethtown, and who probably knew the Lincoln and Hanks families better than almost any other man in the village whom Herndon encountered. He describes

young Abe as "a small boy who would sometimes come with his mother to the store to purchase their stock of family supplies. The little fellow, being a trifle shy, would frequently be seen sitting on a box or keg, and I have often dropped into his half-reluctant palm a lump of sugar which he would dispose of with as much relish as any other boy."

Though Lincoln in subsequent years failed to visit his birthplace, it does not follow that he forgot or viewed it with indifference; on the contrary, he retained and was prone to relate many interesting recollections of his associations there. From Dr. Jesse H. Rodman, of Hodgenville, who in 1865 represented Larue County in the legislature of Kentucky, I learned several characteristic and trustworthy incidents. During the war period a number of the leading citizens of Larue County, desirous of securing some concession or relief from a threatened draft on that county, held a meeting at Hodgenville and decided to send Dr. Rodman to Washington to call on the President and intercede with him in their behalf. Inasmuch as the appeal came from his native county, Lincoln, it was believed, might be moved to grant the desired relief. Meanwhile one of the President's friends went down to the farm on which he was born and cut from a tree growing there a limb or branch of the size required for a cane. This, together with a sum of money contributed by several persons about the court-house, was turned over to Dr. Rodman with directions, when he reached Washington, to have it mounted with a gold or silver head containing the names of the contributors engraved thereon. The whole was then to be presented to Lincoln. "Immediately on my arrival in Washington," related Dr. Rodman, "I called on the Pres-

ident and, after announcing the purpose of my visit as a representative of my fellow citizens in Larue County, ventured to tell him also the story of the cane, explaining that I had left the latter with a silversmith in the city to be mounted and properly engraved. The next day I called with the cane, to make the formal presentation. Lincoln seemed to be deeply pleased by this mark of appreciation on the part of his Kentucky friends and immediately asked how he was to learn who the donors of the cane were. Before I could answer that he would find their names on the metal head, he interrupted me, exclaiming laughingly, 'How absurd such a question. I ought to have known better than to ask it, for you have already answered it. I am like the Irishman who called on me when I was postmaster at New Salem, Illinois, and asked for his mail.

"'What name?' said I.

"'Sure,' said the Irishman, 'and the name is on the letter.'

"The President," continued Dr. Rodman, "ran over the list of early residents of the county, inquiring about the Brownfields, the Cesnas, the Friends, and other pioneer families, displaying a knowledge of persons and places more or less remarkable for one who, for so many years, had been away from his native heath. When I reached the name of Austin Gollaher he halted me. 'Is that old fox living yet?' he exclaimed. 'You may not believe it, but I would rather see him than any other man in Kentucky. Be sure to remember me to him when you reach home. I shall never forget an amusing but very scurvy trick he once played on me when we were boys. With weapons no more formidable than hickory clubs he and I had been playing in the woods and hunting rabbits. After several hours of vigorous ex-

ercise we had stopped to rest. After a while I threw down my cap, climbed a tree, and was resting comfortably in the forks of two limbs. Below me stretched out full length on the grass was Austin apparently asleep. Beside him lay his cap, the inside facing upwards. In the pocket of my little jacket reposed a paw-paw which I had shortly before found. The thought suddenly occurred to me that it would be great fun to drop it into Austin's upturned cap. It was so ripe and soft I could scarcely withdraw it whole from my pocket. Taking careful aim I let it fall. I had calculated just right; for it struck the cap center and I could see portions of soft yellow paw-paw spattering in every direction. I paused to observe the result, convinced that Austin would resent the indignity; but, strange to relate, the proceeding failed to arouse him. Presently I slid down the tree, but judge of my surprise on reaching the ground when I learned that, instead of sleeping, Austin had really been awake; and that while I was climbing the tree he had very adroitly changed caps, substituting my own for his, so that, instead of tormenting him as I was intending, I had simply besmeared my own headgear.'"

Elsewhere I have indicated that Herndon was the first visitor to Kentucky or southern Indiana in quest of intelligence or facts bearing on the events of Lincoln's early life. So far as it related to the collection of the requisite historical material, that statement is correct; but that Herndon was preceded a few weeks by a man whose mission, though nominally different, was along similar lines is also true. Joseph H. Barrett, who during the Civil War period was Commissioner of Pensions in Washington, had for some time been at work on a "Life of Lincoln"

which was published in the summer of 1865. In the earlier part of the year his publishers, Moore, Wilstach & Baldwin, of Cincinnati, had sent to Kentucky and Indiana an artist, in the person of John H. Rowbotham, commissioned to make pictures of important places and scenes in the early life of Lincoln to be engraved and used in illustrating the book. He was, in reality, the first man to penetrate the backwoods of Kentucky and Indiana in search of Lincoln data and material. Rowbotham began his travels at Springfield, after first conferring with Herndon. As he made his way through the territory assigned him he reported to Herndon, detailing his experiences frequently from day to day. Having been told that the original log cabin in which Lincoln was born was still standing near the town of Hodgenville, he made his way there as speedily as possible "fearing lest the structure might be burned, or carried away piecemeal, by the army of relic hunters who would soon be moving in that direction." When he arrived there, however, he found, much to his surprise, that the cabin was no longer in existence. When it disappeared no one seemed to be able to tell.

"At Hodgenville, which is about ten miles northeast of Elizabethtown," writes Rowbotham to Herndon June 24, 1865, "I inquired the way to Rock Spring farm, owned by R. A. Creal, better known as 'Old Dickey Creal.' The farm is about three miles southeast of Hodgenville on a good straight road. The site of Mr. Lincoln's birthplace is on this farm about five hundred yards from Mr. Creal's house. It is situated on a knoll or rising ground and is now a barley field. The cabin has long since disappeared and gone to decay, the only sign of its former existence being a few rocks

indicating where the chimney once stood. At the edge of the field are two old pear trees planted by Thomas Lincoln between which was a gateway leading to the house. Mr. Creal remembers the latter very well. Near the spot is a very romantic spring from which the farm takes its name and where, no doubt, Mr. Lincoln as a child often played."

While in Indiana Rowbotham visited Lincoln's home in Spencer County. "The home," he writes in another letter to Herndon, "lies a little off the Gentryville road on rising ground and is the most perfect reminiscence of Mr. Lincoln's early life. Here the family lived thirteen years. Mr. Lincoln's mother died here and is buried on the summit of a thickly wooded hill about a quarter of a mile from and immediately opposite the house. There is no stone to mark the spot, but it is well known. When you come, inquire for Josiah Crawford, John Romine, and old Mrs. Richardson, all of whom were at the burial of Mrs. Lincoln. Dennis Hanks was also present, but he is now in Illinois and you can see him yourself." There being, at that time, no stone, not even a board to mark the grave, Rowbotham was forced to the conclusion, expressed in one of his letters to Herndon, that "Mr. Lincoln does not appear to have cared for his home after the death of his mother."

Before young Lincoln had reached his tenth year his family moved to Indiana, and here, where they lingered till he had attained his majority, were the days of his wonderful boyhood spent. Here gathered those silent forces whose combination produced that unique character which stands

out in wonder and lofty eminence, one of the colossal figures of modern history. It was these earlier years of his life that had their lasting effect on the mind and temperament of this great mirthful but melancholy man.

The date of the removal from Kentucky to Indiana is readily fixed by the statement of Mr. Lincoln in the sketch of his life which he wrote and delivered to his friend Jesse W. Fell, of Bloomington, Illinois, in 1859. "We reached our new home," he relates, "about the time the State came into the Union" — which would indicate the years 1816 to 1817. After describing the country as a "wild region with many bears and other wild animals still in the woods," he turns to the educational facilities of the period, observing that "there were some schools, so called, but no qualification was ever required of a teacher beyond 'readin', writin', and cipherin' to the Rule of Three.' If a straggler supposed to understand Latin happened to sojourn in the neighborhood he was looked upon as a wizard. There was absolutely nothing to excite ambition for education. Of course when I came of age I did not know much. Still, somehow, I could read, write and cipher to the Rule of Three; but that was all. I have not been to school since. The little advance I now have upon this store of education I have picked up from time to time under the pressure of necessity."

The years of his residence in Indiana Lincoln never failed to recall save with the deepest satisfaction. They were indeed the formative period of his life and therefore constitute an important epoch in his development. There was a fascination in the rude companionship and boisterous horse-play of southern Indiana at that time which left

a deep impression on the tall, coarse-haired youth who grew to manhood in the hills and forests of this frontier region. When he neared the fame of later years he invariably located his best stories in the Hoosier State, and whenever he was heard to say, "That reminds me of an incident which happened when I lived in Indiana," his listeners would move their chairs closer together anxiously awaiting an interesting recital, bristling with wit and the expected "nib," or moral, which was so poignant it pierced the skin, or otherwise so effective it stung like the cracker of a whiplash.

Though brief, Lincoln's school training really began in Indiana. True he was among the pupils at the schools in Kentucky taught by Zachariah Riney and Caleb Hazel, but his attendance was so short and irregular he hardly progressed beyond the alphabet — in fact, it may be truthfully said that he went largely as the companion of his only sister Sarah, who was two years his senior. The array of textbooks at his command was necessarily limited. We know he studied Webster's and, a part of the time, Dillworth's Speller, Pike's Arithmetic, and Murray's English Reader. Of the last-named book he was especially fond. Herndon told me that Lincoln once declared to him that "Murray's English Reader was the greatest and most useful book that could be put in the hands of a child at school."

He had neither grammar nor geography. The arithmetic he did not own, but he borrowed the book of a neighbor and laboriously copied a large part of it on sheets of paper about nine by twelve inches in size which he fastened together with twine sewed through the edge. His step-



PAGE FROM LINCOLN'S HAND-MADE ARITHMETIC, USED BY HIM WHILE A SCHOOLBOY IN GENTRYVILLE, INDIANA, SHOWING DOGGEREL IN CORNER

mother who, in 1865, was living at Charleston, Illinois, still had a portion of this hand-made book which she gave to Herndon. The latter turned several pages over to me, one of which contains the table of Long Measure with its quaint and primitive divisions of measurement:

"Three barley-corns make one inch,
Four inches one hand," etc.

It was in one of the lower corners of this sheet that young Abe had scrawled the four memorable lines of schoolboy doggerel:

"Abraham Lincoln,
His hand and pen,
He will be good,
But God knows when."

In some unaccountable way the young student secured a copy of Barclay's Dictionary which he doubtless frequently consulted, for when Herndon visited the stepmother the latter still had the volume with young Abe's name, in his own hand, written on the fly-leaf. At two places in the neighborhood where he lived in Indiana, the stepmother told Herndon, the boy was given access to books of a more literary character and he was occasionally permitted to take a volume home with him to read. This was at Josiah Crawford's and David Turnham's. From the first he obtained "The Kentucky Preceptor," out of which he learned the various poems and declamations he memorized and occasionally recited at school. At Turnham's there were two books to which he was especially attached and he read and re-read them. They were "Sinbad the Sailor" and "Scott's Lessons." These and the Revised Statutes of Indiana, which Turnham used in connection with the office of township constable, and which volume

the latter turned over to Herndon in 1865, will indicate the probable scope of Lincoln's scholastic ventures up to this time.

With these primitive and unpretentious literary appliances Lincoln slowly acquired the rudiments of his education. All his school-days added together did not equal a year, and he not only was not privileged to attend a high or advanced school, but, until he was old enough to go to Congress, had never seen the inside of a college, academy, or high-school building. As Herndon very pertinently observed, it awakens the tenderest emotions to recall the story of this obscure but ambitious boy battling year after year against his evil star, wasting his ingenuity upon makeshifts and devices in a struggle to secure a training which to-day is not only easily within reach of the poorest and most indifferent lad in the land, but, under our generous educational system, is furnished to all without stint or reluctance.

The commonly accepted notion that Lincoln, especially during his sojourn in Indiana, was what would be called an intensive or industrious young man lacks more or less support. The truth is he had no fondness for the severe labor of the backwoods and no scruples against avoiding it whenever possible. Equally erroneous is the prevalent belief that he spent a large proportion of his time as a hired hand working for others. Service of that kind had no charms for him, and while it is true he occasionally labored for wages the instances were rare and invariably of brief duration. He was not much given to fishing, hunting, or sports generally, but much preferred reading and like diversions. He was an eager listener to debates and other

wordy contests; was delighted with the arguments and contention evoked by a neighborhood controversy, and if a dispute was being aired in the squire's court he was certain to be on hand an earnest and absorbed listener.

Dilating on Lincoln's reputation as a physical laborer serves to recall an interview I had with Dennis Hanks. It was at Charleston, Illinois, where he was living in the fall of 1886. I write from notes of the conversation written at the time.

In August, 1826, Abe, Dennis Hanks, and Squire Hall — the last two having married daughters of Abe's stepmother, Sarah Bush Lincoln — all set out for Posey's Landing on the Ohio River, distant twelve miles from their homes at Gentryville, Indiana, to cut wood, it being reported that there was a brisk demand for that kind of fuel by the boats plying up and down the river. When they arrived they learned that the demand for wood had slackened materially and that, if they succeeded in securing an order for any, they would probably have to take their pay in merchandise, as there was then but a scant supply of cash in the community. How many days they tarried there Hanks did not indicate, but it was long enough to cut nine cords for which they were given nine yards of white domestic at twenty-five cents a yard. "Out of this," related Hanks, "Abe had a shirt made, and it was positively the first white shirt which, up to that time, he had ever owned or worn. It was also the first time he had ever hired out and worked away from home."

When he visited Indiana, Herndon learned that in 1827 Lincoln and his stepbrother, John D. Johnston, journeyed together to Louisville where they secured work

for a brief time on the Portland Canal, then in process of construction around the falls of the Ohio. They were paid in silver dollars, probably the first silver money of any consequence Abe ever received. Naturally he was very proud of it and by virtue of frugal expenditures and determined self-denial managed to carry a goodly portion of it home with him when he returned to Gentryville.

Regarding the history of Mr. Lincoln's days while he lived in Indiana, including glimpses into the social conditions which prevailed there and thus had such a decided influence on his development into manhood, too much weight cannot be attached to the recollections of Dennis and John Hanks. Nor should the activities of Herndon in thus preserving their testimony be overlooked. Lincoln had hardly met his death in 1865 until Herndon was at work securing from both men all the information he could extract which tended to shed any light on the former's birth and boyhood. His method in dealing with Dennis was both systematic and effective. In addition to what the latter told him and which he carefully recorded at the time, Herndon induced him to put his testimony in writing also; but in order to keep him within certain limits and yet retain only so much as was essential to the continuity of the story, Herndon put his inquiry in the form of questions which he numbered, directing Dennis to number his answers also. There are many pages of these letters or statements, most of them dated and all of which were duly turned over to me. Knowing that I had spent more or less time with and had myself interviewed Dennis, Herndon seemed to think I was the proper depositary of the material both of us had gathered. These papers of Dennis, though written in

defiance of the rules of grammar, capitalization, spelling, etc., are nevertheless of decided historic value. One dated December 24, 1865, is so characteristic and faithful a portrayal of life in Indiana when Lincoln lived there, I venture to reproduce it exactly as Dennis Hanks drew it, observing incidentally, that of the thirteen persons who formed the emigrant party that drove from Gentryville, Indiana, to Decatur, Illinois, in March, 1830, only two could write their names: Abraham Lincoln and Dennis Hanks:

December 24 1865.

you speak of my Letter written with a pencil. the Reason of this was my Ink was frose.

part first. we ust to play 4 Corner Bull pen and what we cald cat. I No that you No what it is and throwing a mall over our Sholders Backwards, hopping and half hamen, Resling and so on.

2nd what Religious Songs. The only Song Book was Dupees old Song Book. I Recollect Very well 2 Songs that we ust to Sing, that was

"O, when shall I see jesus and Rain with him aBove." the next was "How teageous and tasteless the hour when jesus No Longer I see."

I have tried to find one of these Books But cant find it. it was a Book used by the old predestinarian Baptists in 1820. this is my Recollection aBout it at this time. we Never had any other

the Next was in the fields

"Hail Collumbia Happy Land if you aint Broke I will Be Damned" and "the turpen turk that Scorns the world and Struts aBout with his whiskers Curld for No other man But himself to See" and all such as this. Abe youst to try to Sing pore old Ned But he Never could Sing Much.

CHAPTER III

The question of Lincoln's birth and descent — The various books on the subject — Investigations by Herndon and the author in Kentucky and elsewhere — The Enloe tradition — The Lincoln family Bible record — Sarah Lincoln — The John L. Scripps incident — Herndon's story of his ride with Lincoln to Petersburg — Dennis and John Hanks, who they were and whence they sprang — Their letters to Herndon regarding the Lincoln family tree.

To what extent the knowledge of his lowly if not obscure origin contributed to the pensive and melancholy tendency in Lincoln's nature is a question not easily answered; but certain it is that much of the curious and absurd speculation regarding his genealogy, which has grown up in the popular mind, is largely due to his vague and evasive attitude when confronted by inquiries regarding his lineage or family history. In most instances the subject has been overlooked or glossed over by Lincoln's numerous biographers, but now that he has attained such enviable proportions among the other great figures in the temple of fame, and is therefore beyond "our power to add or detract," the feeling, gradually developed in the popular mind, that the truth should be known, cannot always be ignored. Nor can a portrait of the real Lincoln be deemed complete or exact which in any appreciable degree fails to bring out all the facts. The reading public has just been favored with "The Paternity of Abraham Lincoln," a book written by Dr. William E. Barton, who has for some time been a student of the subject mentioned in the title. It is a careful and exhaustive essay and will be warmly appreciated by the army of Lincoln students and admirers over the country.

Prior to 1858, Lincoln's achievements had not been noteworthy or momentous enough to attract, extensively, public attention, and it was not till after the debates with Douglas, and especially the Cooper Institute speech, that he began to attain anything like national recognition. When he was thus looming up large on the horizon, the people, manifesting the same degree of interest and anticipation with which they had awaited the history of every other man whose successful exploits had swept him into the limelight, naturally turned to him for the story of his life. At this juncture had he, with his accustomed spirit and candor, met the question squarely and imparted the facts as he understood them, the nebulæ which, for so many years, enveloped him would not have gathered, and the world would have been spared the nauseating and incredible "disclosures" which, under the guise of "revealing the true genesis of a wonderful man," have from time to time drifted into the open sea of public notice.

Among the books which attempt to settle the question of Lincoln's birth and family descent are "The Sorrows of Nancy," published in Richmond, Virginia, and written by a woman under the name of Lucinda Boyd; the "Sad Story of Nancy Hanks," a copyrighted pamphlet by William M. Coleman, of Dallas, Texas; "Truth Stranger than Fiction: or, The True Genesis of a Wonderful Man," by James Cathey, of Bryson City, North Carolina; and "The Parentage of Lincoln," a series of newspaper articles by D. J. Knotts, of Swansea, South Carolina, in which the author seeks to prove that Abraham Lincoln was the son of John C. Calhoun, who became intimate with Nancy Hanks and, for five hundred dollars,

hired Thomas Lincoln to assume the paternity of the child and take the woman to Kentucky.

When, in obedience to the direction of Herndon, I visited Kentucky in quest of material for our contemplated Life of Lincoln, and especially as I neared the region of the latter's birthplace, a network of traditions confronted me. I dug my way patiently through clerks' records in obscure court-houses, read the faded pages of family history in musty old Bibles, deciphered curiously spelled and dimly written letters, followed down the never-ending lanes of neighborhood tradition and backwoods lore, interviewed witnesses of every age and condition in life — in short, searched for facts and data until I had apparently exhausted every available avenue to intelligent information. Each locality had its tradition, and many of them were curious and sometimes amusing. The rancor of sectional strife furnished an atmosphere in which some of these traditions, feeding on their own inconsistencies, grew to the dignity of colossal falsehoods. It is surprising how many at one time or another were current in central Kentucky. Herndon, who visited that locality in the summer of 1865, disposed of several, but even when I followed him later, some of them were still afloat in the currents and eddies of local history. The most persistently adhered to and the least preposterous of them was the Inloe or Enloe legend. I encountered it in both Hardin and Larue Counties, and it also bobbed up in other parts of the State. It is thus summarized by a man who lived in Elizabethtown, a member of one of the leading families and a lawyer, whose account, written and turned over to Herndon, lies before me:

"After Abe's birth a man by the name of Abraham Enloe living in this region claimed him as his son. Thomas Lincoln and Enloe had a regular set-to fight about the matter, in which encounter Lincoln bit off the end of Enloe's nose. Finally, Lincoln, to clear himself of Enloe, moved to Indiana. As far back as I can remember there lived in Hardin County three families of Enloes, all from North Carolina and all said to be cousins. Isham Enloe married a widow Larue and had a family of some distinction. Abe Enloe, another cousin, tall, dignified-looking man of fine personal appearance, very neat, silent, and reserved; more of a bookworm than anything else; married a Vernon — one of our best families — and was the father of a respectable family. Then comes our veritable Abe Enloe who claims to be the father of Lincoln. He was over six feet high and a fine specimen of physical manhood. I remember him with part of his nose bit off as one of the institutions of the county for thirty years. Very silent, very unobtrusive, never drunk nor boisterous, he seemed not to suffer in reputation by the conduct of his sisters who were more or less boisterous. I never had much to say to him except when I happened to sell him some article for his farm in my uncle's store. He may have been a man of destiny also and patiently filled the place assigned by Providence."

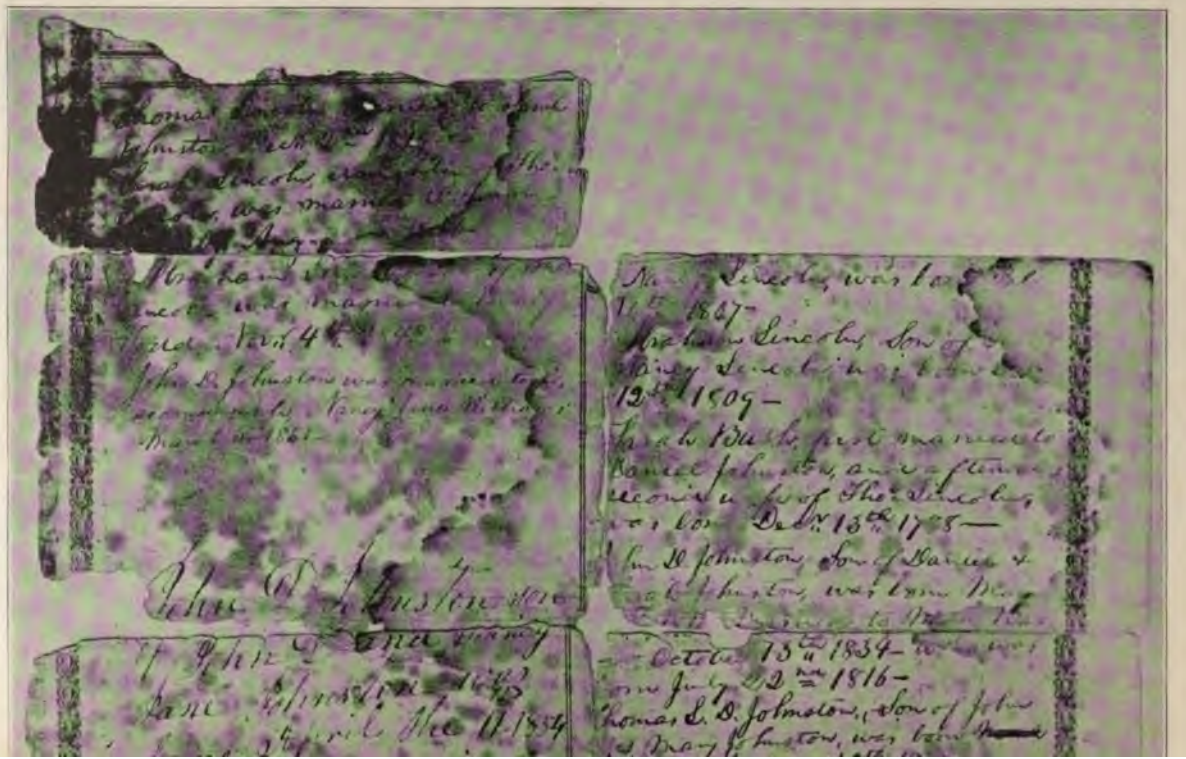
In addition to the Enloe story I devoted some time to the George Brownfield legend and to another which sought to fix the paternity of Lincoln on one of the Hardins. I was even provided with pictures of members of the Brownfield and Young families, all of them tall, muscular specimens, with unusually long arms, to impress me with the

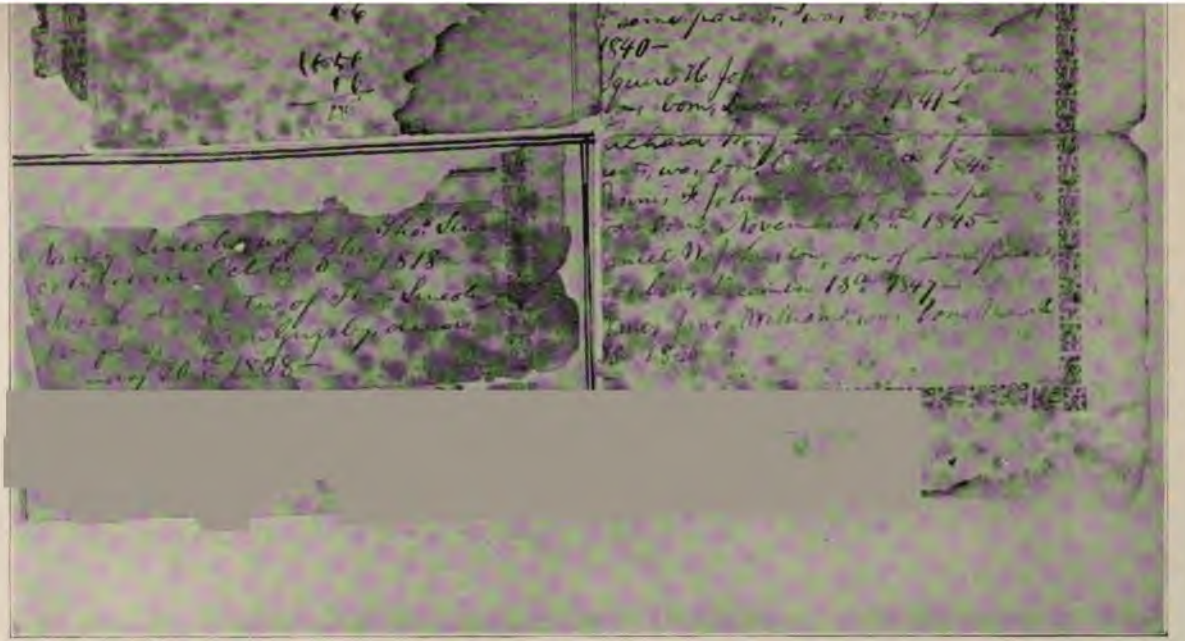
plausibility of the theory that, as Lincoln himself was a man of like physical proportions, he must have descended from the same family source. I listened to a long and carefully worded argument by a citizen of Mount Sterling, an editor and lawyer, claiming descent from the millwright Abe Enloe, at the town of Paris, and who sought to prove through that source his alleged kinship to Lincoln.

The books enumerated and the legends mentioned are not all the stories relating to Lincoln's ancestry that I encountered, but they are representative of their class and all fall to the ground when certain tests are applied. Aside from their inconsistencies there is an absence of proof in support of their ridiculous contentions beyond tradition or hearsay. Questioning the legitimacy of Lincoln's birth they overlook the well-established fact that he was the second child in the family, a sister older than himself, Sarah by name, having been born in 1807, whereas he did not see the light of day till 1809, almost three years after his parents' marriage. Moreover, as to the Enloe legend in particular, it is now known that at the time of the marriage of Thomas Lincoln and Nancy Hanks the latter was twenty-three years old and Abe Enloe, according to the recollection of some witnesses, hardly seventeen. Viewing the question as a whole there is no good reason to shake our faith in the conclusion that Abraham Lincoln was the lawfully begotten son of the above-named parents.

The family record in Thomas Lincoln's Bible by his son Abraham, and the only Bible record of the Lincoln family of which we have any knowledge, was, until recently, in the possession of Mr. C. F. Gunther, of Chicago. It covered







THE FAMILY RECORD IN THOMAS LINCOLN'S BIBLE, CHIEFLY IN ABRAHAM LINCOLN'S HAND

A piece is missing from the upper right-hand corner. The entries shown at the lower left-hand corner are from the back of the sheet.

but one sheet and was found by the author many years ago in the hands of a daughter of Dennis Hanks. The sheet had been detached from between the leaves of the book and had been folded in several places so long that the paper was gradually wearing away at the folds and the section in the upper right-hand corner — a piece about an inch and a half square — was missing. Possibly the latter was that part of the page which bore the record of the marriage of Thomas Lincoln and Nancy Hanks, although it is likewise possible that inscribed therein was the date of the birth of Thomas Lincoln as the head of the household. Within recent years documentary evidence has come to light establishing the fact that the marriage took place June 12, 1806. But did Mr. Lincoln know that? If, as Henry Watterson and others have stated, he died without knowing whether his parents were married or not, the query naturally arises, What did he write in the missing section of the Bible record? From the remaining portion of the latter we learn that "Sarah, daughter of Thomas and Nancy Lincoln, was born February 10, 1807," and that Abraham, son of the same parents, "was born February 12, 1809." Another son, Thomas, was born about 1812, but he lived a few days only. The record is silent as to his birth or death.

Sarah, the daughter, resembled her illustrious brother in but few particulars. She was short in stature and somewhat plump in build; her hair, according to her stepmother, was dark brown and her eyes gray. She was given the name Sarah at birth and was never called Nancy, as erroneously contended by certain biographers of Lincoln including Nicolay and Hay. When Herndon visited

Indiana he met several persons who knew and remembered the girl, including Elizabeth Crawford at whose house she frequently worked. Mrs. Crawford testified that she was slow and in some respects seemed to be lacking in spirit and initiative — in fact had, in a marked degree, the traits that characterized her father; just as her brother seemed to have inherited from his mother the quick perception, clear reasoning powers, and profound intellect that lifted him above the level of his surroundings. The sister was married to Aaron Grigsby August 2, 1826, and died in childbirth January 20, 1828. A beautiful granite monument was recently erected over her unmarked grave near the village of Gentryville, Indiana. As her death occurred before the removal of the family to Illinois, our knowledge of her is necessarily meager and dim. For the little we have been able to learn about her we are indebted to Dennis and John Hanks rather than to her illustrious brother, who seems to have been more or less silent regarding her. Herndon is authority for the statement that Lincoln seldom ever referred to her.

In tracing the line of Lincoln's ancestry we are not without certain authentic landmarks to guide us; and fortunately for all concerned their accuracy cannot well be questioned, for they were established by Lincoln himself. Late in the year 1859, when he was asked for the material and data usually expected of a man who has the presidential fever and whose career and deeds are entitled to more or less conspicuous mention in the newspapers, he made preparations, though with some reluctance, to comply with the request; but instead of dictating the required facts to another to put into shape for publication, as the

average man of his standing would have done, he sat down one evening in his law office, after his partner, Herndon, had gone home, and with due care and deliberation wrote the story himself. After its completion he turned the paper over to a friend to be published or not as might seem to be for the best. With the exception of the few lines furnished to the compiler of the Directory of the Thirtieth Congress in 1847, this is the first attempt on Lincoln's part to acquaint the world with the facts and incidents of his personal career. Many years ago I had the original manuscript of this sketch in my hands. It covers several sheets of small note-paper and is a very clever, if not ingeniously worded, document. The writer, dwelling with pardonable pride on his paternal forebears, devotes the greater part of an entire page to the deeds and exploits of certain members of the Lincoln family, but scarcely two lines to the maternal side of the house. He even fails to state what his mother's name was, the only reference to her existence being the brief and incidental allusion that she "came of a family by the name of Hanks." Not long after this paper was written, a correspondent in Kentucky, in an effort to identify Lincoln with a branch of the Hanks family there, ventured to make certain inquiries into his antecedents. "You are mistaken about my mother" was his blunt reply, and beyond that he made no effort to enlighten his inquirer or otherwise add to his knowledge.

The above comprises all that the world knew of the history of Lincoln prior to the spring of 1860. Then came the great National Convention at Chicago. When it had adjourned the attention of the country was at once

focused on the immortal Railsplitter at Springfield. All the roads now led to his house. Painters, sculptors, photographers, correspondents arrived by every train. They made his picture, they modeled his bust, they beset him at every turn. He received and with patient grace welcomed the well-nigh interminable line of callers that daily thronged through the doorway of the plain two-story house on Eighth Street. He told them amusing stories and sent them away laughing; but although ordinarily frank and communicative he seemed to draw within his shell whenever the conversation turned on himself or his family history. The situation was more or less delicate, to say the least. Meanwhile word reached him from sources he deemed it unwise to ignore and he was made to realize that the time for reticence and evasion had passed; in other words, that he must take the public into his confidence and tell the whole story.

It was at this juncture that John L. Scripps, the editor of the "Chicago Press and Tribune," appeared upon the scene. He was the authorized biographer of the nominee of the Chicago Convention. Of the visit of Mr. Scripps to Springfield to begin his work it is unnecessary to go into details. It suffices to say that in due time the biography — a pamphlet of thirty-two pages — appeared and was widely distributed. "Lincoln seemed to be painfully impressed," wrote Scripps in a letter to Herndon, after Lincoln's death, which has been turned over to me, "with the extreme poverty of his early surroundings — the utter absence of all romantic and heroic elements. He communicated some facts concerning his ancestry which he did not wish to have published and which I have never spoken of

or alluded to before." To this man, therefore, Lincoln must have disclosed the facts he had been so persistently withholding from the public. But alas for us, what they were we shall probably never know, for, only a few months after Lincoln's death, the biographer to whom they were communicated himself died without revealing a word!

From Lincoln's halting and evasive demeanor, therefore, it soon became apparent that, somewhere in his ancestral line, there existed a lapse or hiatus or some equally embarrassing circumstance which he saw fit to withhold. The question naturally arose, Where and what was the trouble? We might still be in the dark and as far as ever from a solution of the difficulty but for the timely contribution of Herndon, who came nearer bearing the relation of confidant to Lincoln than any other man in Springfield outside of Joshua F. Speed. Herndon's testimony relates to a revelation made to him by Lincoln under the following circumstances:

"On the subject of his ancestry," writes Herndon, "I only remember one time when Mr. Lincoln referred to it. It was in the fifties when he and I were driving to court in Menard County. The suit we were discussing touched upon the subject of hereditary traits. During the ride he spoke of his mother, dwelling on her characteristics and mentioning or enumerating what qualities he believed he had inherited from her. Among other things I remember he said she was the illegitimate daughter of Lucy Hanks and a well-bred Virginia farmer or planter; he argued that from this last source came his power of analysis, his logic, his mental activity, his ambition, and all the qualities that distinguished him from the other members and descend-

ants of the Hanks family. His theory was that, for certain reasons, illegitimate children are sometimes sturdier and brighter than those born in lawful wedlock; and in his case he believed that his better nature and finer qualities came from this unknown, broad-minded Virginian.[1] The revelation — painful as it was — called up the recollection of his mother, and, as the buggy jolted over the road, he added ruefully, 'God bless my mother; all that I am or ever expect to be I owe to her,' and lapsed into silence. Our interchange of ideas ceased and we rode on for some time without exchanging a word. Burying himself in thought and musing, no doubt, over the disclosure he had just made, he drew about himself a barrier which I feared to penetrate. His words and melancholy tone made a deep impression on me. It was an experience I can never forget. As we neared the town of Petersburg we were overtaken by an old man who entertained us with reminiscences of early days on the frontier. Lincoln was in turn reminded of several Indiana stories, and by the time we had reached the unpretentious court-house at our destination his sadness had passed away."

Fortunately for Herndon his narrative of what Lincoln told him — which may be the same thing Lincoln afterwards confided to John L. Scripps — does not lack for support; for, in its vital or material points, it is corroborated by the testimony of John and Dennis Hanks, the

[1] Of course this theory of hereditary or transmitted traits was not original with Lincoln; but it was most impressively illustrated in the history of his own, or rather, the Hanks family. Reared in extreme poverty and denied all early advantages, he was nevertheless able, by virtue of his profound intellect and sheer native powers, to rise to the loftiest niche any American has thus far attained; but, of the seven other children born to Lucy Hanks after the birth of her daughter Nancy — who was Abraham's mother — and their descendants, not one has ever been heard from.

two most competent of all the witnesses who have thus far attempted to enlighten us regarding the question of Lincoln's family descent. Their recollections, largely in their own handwriting, were recorded within a year after Lincoln's death, and, notwithstanding all that has been said and written on the subject since then, their testimony remains practically uncontradicted. According to Lincoln the two were cousins of each other and first cousins of his mother. Both were born in Kentucky — John, February 9, 1802, and Dennis, May 15, 1799; both died in Illinois; John, July 12, 1890, and Dennis, October 21, 1892.

Before proceeding further with their testimony, however, it will not be out of place to notice here the deductions of Mrs. Caroline Hanks Hitchcock, a lady in Cambridge, Massachusetts — descended from Benjamin Hanks, of Plymouth — who, in 1899, wrote and published a book entitled "Nancy Hanks — The True Story of Lincoln's Mother," containing an account of the author's researches into the early history of the Hanks family and preceded by an introduction by Miss Ida Tarbell. The purpose of the work, as stated, was to "clear the name of Nancy Hanks Lincoln," and great stress is laid on the will of Joseph Hanks executed January 9, 1793, in Nelson County, Kentucky, and found by the author during a visit to that State. In this will the testator, among other things, bequeaths to his daughter Nancy "one heifer yearling called Peidy," whereupon the author at once concludes that she has accomplished her mission, proclaiming that her discovery "settles the question of Nancy Hanks' parentage, showing that she had a father who recognized her in his

will with the same generosity that he did her brothers and sisters." Mrs. Hitchcock's motives are highly commendable and praiseworthy, but unfortunately for the accuracy of her deductions it happens that there were numerous Nancy Hankses in Kentucky in those days, and she fails to furnish the proof that the Nancy Hanks named by Joseph Hanks in his will was the same Nancy Hanks who was married to Thomas Lincoln. Two other facts tend to discredit her conclusion: Lincoln's mother was the daughter of Lucy Hanks, and the latter, we know, had a sister named Nancy. It will be observed that Joseph Hanks in his will makes no mention of a daughter Lucy and that his wife bore the name Nancy.

Dennis Hanks was the natural son of Charles Friend and Nancy Hanks. The latter after the birth of her son was married to Levi Hall and became the mother of several more children. Being as he himself states a "base-born" child, Dennis was not admitted to the Hall household, but was duly turned over to the sheltering care of his mother's sister Elizabeth, married to Thomas Sparrow. The latter were a childless couple and we are told cheerfully took the cast-off waif, caring for him as dutifully and affectionately as if he had been their own child. Nancy Hanks, the mother of Dennis Hanks, had a sister Lucy, who, in 1783, gave birth to a daughter, also called Nancy, to whom was reserved an illustrious maternity in the birth of her son Abraham Lincoln. Who the father of this last-named Nancy Hanks was no one, not even Mr. Lincoln himself, has thus far been able to tell; but we know that after her birth her mother, Lucy Hanks, was married to Henry Sparrow and became the mother of seven more

children. The records of Mercer County, Kentucky, show that "the rites of marriage between Henry Sparrow and Lucy Hanks were duly solemnized by John Baily April 3, 1791." Nancy Hanks must, therefore, have been about eight years old when her mother was married to Henry Sparrow.

For the same reason that Dennis Hanks spent his early boyhood apart from the Hall family, his cousin, Nancy Hanks, was not suffered to remain in the same household with the children of her mother and Henry Sparrow. She, too, had been turned over to the fostering care of Thomas and "Betsy" or Elizabeth Sparrow and under their inviting roof-tree she for a time shared the fortunes and companionship of her cousin Dennis Hanks. That their foster-parents gave heed to their needs and zealously strove to promote their comfort and welfare is evidenced by the fact that both children seem in some way to have absorbed more of the rudiments of an education than any of their immediate kindred. Dennis Hanks, though of no greater native ability than his cousin John, had much the advantage of the latter in the matter of educational qualifications. His writing is legible and his letters and notes or statements, of which Mr. Herndon at one time had at least fifty pages, indicate a better knowledge of English than one could expect from a man whose early opportunities were so distressingly meager and adverse. A few extracts from his testimony, copied from the original manuscript, are more or less illuminative. They will serve to test his competency as a witness. Many of his letters are in response to specific inquiries propounded by Mr. Herndon, and when he replied he usually repeated

the question adopting as nearly as possible the original phraseology regardless of its primitive spelling and rude capitalization. Thus, in February, 1866, writing from Charleston, Illinois, Hanks says:

> Those questions you Propound is the Easiest for me to answer of all the Rest. I give it in full, Noing what I say. 1st What is the Name of A. Lincolns Mother?
>
> Hir Name was Nancy Sparrow; hir fathers Name was Henry Sparrow, hir Mother was Lucy Sparrow, her Madin name was Hanks, sister to my Mother. 2nd. You say why was she cald Hanks?
>
> All I can say is this She was Deep in Stalk of the Hanks family. Calling hir Hanks probily is My falt. I allways told hir She Looked More Like the Hankses than Sparrow. I think this is the way; if you call hir Hanks you Make hir a Base born Child which is not trew.

Of course no reasonable thinking person will doubt that Dennis Hanks not only knew who his own mother was, but who was the mother of his cousin Nancy as well. The same statement will apply to John Hanks; but the one difficulty with the testimony of both witnesses is, that while persisting in the declaration that Lincoln's mother was a daughter of Lucy Sparrow, and therefore should be called Sparrow, they overlooked the fact that, in thus endeavoring to preserve unbroken the Hanks ancestral line, they were in flat contradiction with the highest grade of evidence known to the law: a duly authorized public record. The clerk of Mercer County, Kentucky, certifies that Lucy Hanks and Henry Sparrow were married April 3, 1791; if, therefore, as these witnesses would have us believe, Lucy Hanks's daughter Nancy was not born till after the marriage to Henry Sparrow, she would have been scarcely fourteen years old at the time of her marriage to

Thomas Lincoln, whereas, on the contrary, she was then twenty-three, having been born in 1783.

February 22, 1866, Dennis Hanks writes Herndon again:

1st question, How comes it that Lincoln him Self Calls his Mother Nancy Hanks?

I say this I Dont Believe he ever Said so for his Mother was Nancy Lincoln; hir Madin Name was Nancy Sparrow. So what is the Use of all this?

Further along in the same letter he says:

You Say that you have Received a Letter from Charles Friend; he wished to No Sum of my ants and unkels. I will Say this a Bout it Billy. I am a Base Born Child. My mother was Nancy Hanks, The ant of A. Lincolns Mother; My first ant Lucy Sparrow, Next polly Friend, Next Elizabeth Sparrow, these on My Mothers Side and Abes; one ant on My fathers Side Married Zary Wilcox hir name was Sally Friend.

February 28, 1866, he writes:

Friend William those questions is Mity Easy to answer.

1st, Who was the Mother of Nancy Sparrow?

Now this is Abes Mother you asking a Bout. It was Lucy Hanks first and Next Lucy Sparrow My Ant.

2nd What was Miss Nancy Sparrows fathers Name?

It was Henry Sparrow. Lucy Hanks was his wife, the Mother of Abes Mother and my ant.

Did Mister Sparrow and his wife have any children except Nancy Sparrow?

I answer yes they had 8 children 4 Sons and 4 Daughters. James, thomas, Henry, George: girls Sally, Elizabeth, Nancy, all Born in Mercer county Kentucky.

3rd. Who did Jesse Friend Mary?

He married My ant polly Hanks, Abes Mothers ant. Thomas Sparrow married Elizabeth Hanks, A. Lincolns ant, Sister to Henry Sparrows wife Lucy Hanks; this is their first name.

Who did Levi Hall mary?

He married My Mother Nancy Hanks which was Lucy Hanks Sister, Henry Sparrows wife, Abes grand Mother.

4th Was you Raised by Charles friend or thomas Sparrow?
I was raised by thomas Sparrow on the Little South fork of Nolin Kentucky.
5 Was thomas Sparrow Mr. Lincolns Mothers father?
I answer No Kin at all.

Further extracts from the written recollections of this unique and willing witness would simply be confirmatory of his original testimony. At the time of his death he was the only man then living who had seen the infant son of Thomas and Nancy Lincoln before he was a week old. His narrative of this event, told in his crude and homely style, is not without interest. "They told me the Lincolns had a baby at thur house," he related to the writer at Charleston, Illinois, October 28, 1886, "and so I jest run all the way down thar. I guess I was on hand purty early, fur I rickolect when I held the little feller in my arms his mother said, 'Be keerful with him, Dennis, fur you air the fust boy he 's ever seen.' I sort o' swung him back and forth; a little too peart, I reckon, fur with the talkin' and the shakin' he soon begun to cry and then I handed him over to my Aunt Polly who wuz standin' close by. 'Aunt,' sez I, 'take him; he 'll never come to much,' fur I 'll tell you he wuz the puniest, cryin'est little youngster I ever saw."

Dennis Hanks lived to be the last survivor of the little band that gathered about the grave of Nancy Hanks Lincoln when she was laid to rest on the crest of that little knoll in southern Indiana. He also witnessed the death and burial of his own mother as well as that of his foster-parents Thomas and Elizabeth Sparrow; in fact, it was through his clear recollection of incidents and objects that it has been possible with any degree of accuracy to deter-

mine the location of the grave of Nancy Hanks. In a letter to Mr. Herndon, which bears no date, he writes:

You ask was Mr. Sparrow and Wife Buried on the same Mound? I say yes, the Women was Side by Side; Abes Mother in the Middle, first My ant, which was thomas Sparrows wife on one side of Abes Mother and My Mother on the other side. Levi Hall on the Side of his wife, which was My Mother, and thomas Sparrow was on the side of his wife which was My ant, the 5 together. Abes Mother Died first; they all Died Close together.

The association of John Hanks, the other witness referred to in these pages, with the other Hankses, the Sparrows, and the Friends, was not so intimate or continuous as that of his cousin Dennis Hanks. About the time of Mr. Lincoln's birth John Hanks left Hardin for Grayson County in Kentucky. In 1822 he emigrated to Spencer County, Indiana, buying a tract of land near the Lincoln farm. Six years later he removed to Macon County, Illinois, where he was living when Thomas Lincoln and his family, migrating from Indiana, joined him in the spring of 1830. He made six flatboat trips to New Orleans, one of them with Abraham Lincoln. He was a soldier in the Black Hawk War and also in the Civil War, serving as an enlisted man in the Twenty-First Illinois Volunteers (General Grant's regiment) for three years. Lincoln held him in high esteem. "I can say," wrote Herndon in an endorsement on the margin of one of John Hanks's statements, "that this testimony can be safely relied upon. Mr. Lincoln loved this man — thought him truthful, honest, and noble. Lincoln has stated this to me over and over again."

While the recollections of John Hanks are not so vo-

luminous and cover less range than the contributions of Dennis, yet he corroborates the latter on all vital and essential points, also resorting to the same artifice to legitimize the birth of Lincoln's mother by naming her Nancy Sparrow. His first letter, written at Decatur, Illinois, is dated May 25, 1865. After a brief sketch of Thomas Lincoln he says of the latter's wife: "Nancy Sparrow was the mother of Abraham Lincoln. Her mother's name was Lucy Hanks and was born in Virginia." In a subsequent statement he says: "Abe's mother was my first cousin. His grandfather and grandmother on his mother's side lived in Mercer County, Kentucky, about twenty-five miles south of his grandfather on his father's side. Dennis and I are cousins." In a letter still later he says: "Mr. Sparrow and Mrs. Sparrow never came to Illinois. Henry Sparrow was the husband's name. They lived and died in Mercer County, Kentucky."

The last letter from John Hanks was written at Linkville, Klamath County, Oregon, June 12, 1887, at which place he was then living. It was addressed to me. After a brief description of the physical make-up of Lincoln's mother, he says of her: "Her mother married Henry Sparrow. She was shrewd, not very much of a talker; very religious and her disposition was very quiet."

CHAPTER IV

Removal of the Lincolns from Indiana to Illinois in 1830 — Thomas Lincoln sells the land to Charles Grigsby — Leaving Gentryville — Names of the emigrants and description of the journey — Reaching Macon County, Illinois — Abe leaves the family near Decatur and pushes out for himself — Thomas Lincoln and the Hankses — Story of Thomas Johnston jailed for stealing a watch and how Lincoln saved him — Recollections of Harriet Chapman who lived at the Lincoln home in Springfield.

THE year 1830 is a milestone in the life of Abraham Lincoln. It marks not only the time when he attained his majority and became his own master, but also when the Lincoln family made its last interstate removal: from Indiana to Illinois. This early migration westward is of such moment and historical importance that the legislatures of the two States have sought, through commissions selected for the purpose, to determine, and, by means of monuments and bronze tablets, to mark, the route over which these poor and luckless pioneers made their way from the village of Gentryville in Spencer County, Indiana, to their destination, a point several miles west of the town of Decatur in Macon County, Illinois.

In the year 1829 John Hanks had settled near the last-named place and was soon so well pleased with his new abode that he wrote to the Lincolns and Hankses in Indiana urging them to "pull up stakes" and follow. "The proposition," recites the Indiana Commission in their report, "met with the general consent of the Lincoln contingent and especially suited the roving and migratory spirit of Thomas Lincoln. He had been induced by the same rosy and alluring reports to leave Indiana. Four

times had he moved since his first marriage and in point of worldly goods he was no better off than when he first started in life. His land groaned under the weight of a long neglected encumbrance, and like many of his neighbors he was ready for another change. Having disposed of his eighty acres of land to Charles Grigsby for one hundred and twenty-five dollars and his corn and hogs to his friend David Turnham (the corn bringing ten cents a bushel and the hogs being 'lumped'), he loaded his household goods into a wagon drawn by two yoke of oxen and with his family set out early in March, 1830, for the prairies of central Illinois. The emigrant party comprised thirteen persons and included Thomas and Sarah Bush Lincoln, their two sons, Abraham Lincoln and John D. Johnston; Squire Hall, his wife, Matilda Johnston, and son, John; Dennis Hanks, his wife, Elizabeth Johnston, and four children: Sarah J., Nancy M., Harriet A., and John T. Hall and Hanks had married the two daughters of Mrs. Lincoln.

"The journey was long and tedious, the streams swollen and the roads muddy almost to the point of impassability. The rude wagon with its primitive wooden wheels creaked and groaned as it crawled through the woods and now and then stalled in the mud. Many were the delays, but none ever disturbed the equanimity of its passengers. They were cheerful in the face of adversity hopeful and determined; but none of them more so than the ungainly youth in buckskin breeches and coonskin cap who wielded the gad and urged the patient oxen forward. As they entered the new State little did the curious people in the various towns and villages through which they passed dream that the obscure and penniless driver who

yelled his commands to the dumb oxen was destined to become the Chief Magistrate of the greatest nation of modern times."

As agreed upon by the authorities of Indiana and Illinois, the route through the two States leads as follows: In Indiana from Gentryville northward through Dale to Jasper; thence northwestwardly to Petersburg, thence to Vincennes. At the latter place the Wabash was crossed and they pushed on to Lawrenceville, Illinois; thence northwestwardly again to Palestine, York, and Darwin, where they left the Wabash and traveled northwestwardly again passing Richwoods, Dead Man's Grove in Coles County, Nelson in Moultrie County, finally reaching their destination, a few miles west of Decatur in Macon County, Illinois.

Here it was they pitched their tent. Abe helped John Hanks split the rails that brought him fame, and in various ways made himself useful. Realizing that he had attained manhood, he now began to measure himself along with other people. His family, all things considered, were indeed a sorry lot — his father poor, inert, and devoid of ambition and the other members equally dull, improvident, and shiftless. To be forced to spend the remainder of his days amid such unpalatable surroundings was a proposition from which he recoiled with feelings of commingled antipathy and regret. As he reasoned, other places existed where he could better his environment. The truth is the young eagle was anxious to try his wings! Therefore when he realized that his kindred, the ill-starred emigrants from Indiana, were now comfortably and, as he hoped, permanently settled, he left them, pushing on to

another locality far enough away to avoid their illiterate if not unwelcome companionship.

It will not do to leave the impression that Lincoln was selfish and indifferent to the wants of his family. He never sought to evade the obligation to care for his father and stepmother — in fact, one of his last acts before leaving for Washington to be inaugurated President in February, 1861, was to visit his stepmother at Charleston, Illinois, and leave with her a generous sum of money to lighten the burden of her declining years and thus insure her every comfort. Likewise the letter by Lincoln to his stepbrother, John D. Johnston, in January, 1851, which Herndon caused to be published, forever dispels the imputation that he was callous or indifferent to the needs of his father.

And yet, although Thomas Lincoln lived for over twenty years in Coles County, Illinois, and within seventy-five miles of Springfield, he never visited his son there and, so far as is known, was never in the town. When Mr. Lincoln was wedded to Mary Todd, in November, 1842, not one of his kindred was present. Whether they were invited or not has never been determined. An idea of the moral and social status of the Hankses and Johnstons who formed Thomas Lincoln's household, and in whose company his son Abraham grew to manhood, may be gleaned from incidents suggested to me by Herndon and which I carefully investigated.

In a statement furnished to Herndon in 1865, Thomas L. D. Johnston, the son of Lincoln's stepbrother, John D. Johnston, says: "Mr. Lincoln took a fancy to my younger brother also named Abraham; wanted him to come to



HOUSE NEAR FARMINGTON, ILLINOIS, IN WHICH THOMAS LINCOLN LIVED, AND WHERE HE DIED IN 1851

Springfield, live at Lincoln's home, and go to school so as to get a fair start in the world; but when Mrs. Lincoln was consulted she objected so bitterly her husband was obliged to write to my brother and tell him the plan could not be carried out because of domestic opposition. He offered, however, to give my brother money to pay for his books and the schooling he received at home. He died in 1861 at the age of twenty-two."

Another episode came to me through Henry C. Whitney, who was a close friend of Mr. Lincoln, and for years a lawyer in Urbana, Illinois, later removing to Chicago. I investigated the story and learned that Mr. Whitney's version was fully corroborated by the court and county records.

"In the summer of 1856," he related, "when Mr. Lincoln was one of the electors-at-large on the Frémont presidential ticket, a boy was assisting a man to drive some horses to the northern part of Illinois. They stopped overnight at Champaign, and while there the boy went to a small watchmaker's shop, kept by an old and decrepit man named Green, upon an errand and managed to purloin a watch. The theft was discovered in time to cause the boy's arrest at the next stopping-place. He was brought before my father, a justice of the peace, and the case being made out the boy was committed; but the boy had asked that the case be held open till he could send for his uncle Abraham Lincoln to defend him. Meanwhile he was committed to jail to await the action of the grand jury.

"Not long after this occurrence I attended a meeting held at Urbana, the county seat at which Mr. Lincoln was

one of the speakers. When he saw me he called me aside and whispered: 'There is a boy in your jail I want to see, but I don't want any one beside yourself to know it. I wish you would speak to the jailer and have him arrange to admit yourself and me to the jail after this meeting is over.' I then recalled the crippled boy, whereupon Lincoln explained that when his father married his second wife she had a son about his own age — John D. Johnston — and that they were raised together, slept together, and loved each other like brothers. The crippled boy was a son of that foster-brother and was rapidly going to the bad. 'He is under a charge of stealing a gun at Charleston,' said Lincoln sadly, 'and I 'm going to help him out of these two cases, but that 's the last. After that if he wants to continue his thieving I shall do nothing more for him.'

"The jail was a rude log cabin structure in which prisoners were put in through a trapdoor in the second story, there being no other entrance. So Lincoln and I were admitted into the small enclosure surrounding the jail, and as we approached the one-foot square hole through which we could converse with the prisoner, he heard us and set up a hypocritical wailing and thrust out toward us a very dirty Bible which Lincoln took and turned over the leaves mechanically. He then said: 'Where were you going, Tom?' The latter attempted to reply, but his wailing made it incoherent, so Lincoln cut it short by saying: 'Now, Tom, do what they tell you — behave yourself — don't talk to any one, and when court closes I will be here and see what I can do for you. Now stop crying and behave yourself.' And with a few more words we left. Lincoln was very sad; in fact I never saw him more so.

"At the fall term of the court Amzi McWilliams, the prosecuting attorney, agreed with us that if the Greens would come into court and state that they did not desire to press the case further he would file a *nolle pros.* That same evening Lincoln and others were to speak in a church in Champaign, and at my suggestion Lincoln and I left the meeting and made our way to the house where the Greens lived. They were a venerable old couple and we found them seated in their humble kitchen greatly astonished at our visit. I introduced Lincoln, who explained his position and wishes in the matter in a homely, plain way, and the good old couple assented. The next day they came into court and formally expressed themselves willing that the boy should be released, which, as the records of the court will show, was promptly done."

I cannot pass from the subject of Lincoln's family in the early days without mention of one member whom I personally knew and from whose lips I learned much that has escaped biographers and historians save what she imparted to Herndon. I refer to Harriet Chapman, a daughter of Dennis Hanks, who became the wife of Augustus H. Chapman and who died not long since in Charleston, Illinois, being past eighty years of age. The lady in her youth was for a time a member of Abraham Lincoln's household in Springfield. It was not long after Mr. Lincoln's marriage to Mary Todd when the children were still small. Mr. Lincoln had invited her to come to Springfield and make her home with him, with which generous invitation she finally complied. For the benefit of the author, who visited her at her home in Charleston several times, she described her departure and journey

from the latter place to Springfield. Lincoln had been attending court in Charleston, and after the adjournment he drove to the home of Dennis Hanks from which point he and the girl set out for Springfield. The conveyance was a wheeled vehicle, a buggy, perhaps, drawn by a bay mare which Lincoln assured his fellow passenger he had named Belle. Sometimes, he said, he called her Queen. The ride through to their destination consumed parts of two days. Mrs. Chapman's account of the journey and her recollections of her home with the Lincolns was an entertaining and in some respects an amusing chapter. Her purpose was to attend school while in Springfield, and she lived with the Lincolns as a member of the household for about a year and a half; but in time her relations with Mrs. Lincoln became so strained, if not intolerable, she found it a relief at last to withdraw and return to her home at Charleston. The letters she wrote to Mr. Herndon between 1865 and 1868, and which are still in my possession, afford such characteristic and relevant glimpses into Lincoln's home life after his marriage to Mary Todd that I venture to quote a few lines.

In a letter written at Charleston, Illinois, November 21, 1866, she says: "You ask me how Mr. Lincoln acted at home. I can say, and that truly, he was all that a husband, father, and neighbor should be. Always kind and affectionate to his wife and child (Bob being the only one when I was with them) and very pleasant to all about him. Never did I hear him utter an unkind word to any one. For instance, one day he undertook to correct his child and his wife was determined that he should not, and attempted to take it from him; but in this she failed.

She tried tongue-lashing, but met with the same fate, for Mr. Lincoln corrected his child, as a father ought to, in the face of his wife's anger, and that too without changing his countenance once or making any reply to her. His favorite way of reading when at home was lying on the floor. I fancy I see him now lying full length in the hall of his old home. He would turn a chair down on the floor with a pillow on it. He was very fond of reading poetry and would often, when he appeared to be in a brown study, commence reading aloud 'The Burial of Sir John Moore,' and so on. He often told laughable jokes and stories when he thought we were looking sad and gloomy." The letter contains this additional paragraph: "Anything I can tell you regarding Mr. Lincoln will be cheerfully given, but I would rather omit further mention of his wife, as I could say but little in her favor."

In a letter dated December 10, 1866, she writes: "'Mr. Lincoln was remarkably fond of children. One of his greatest pleasures when at home was that of nursing and playing with his little boy. He was what I would call a hearty eater and enjoyed a good meal of victuals as much as any one I ever knew. I have often heard him say that he could eat corn cakes as fast as two women could make them, although his table at home was set very sparingly. Mrs. Lincoln was very economical; so much so that by some she might have been pronounced stingy. Mr. Lincoln seldom ever wore his coat when in the house at home and often went to the table in his shirt-sleeves, which practice greatly annoyed his wife who, by the way, loved to put on style."

CHAPTER V

Lincoln's several proposals of marriage — Story of his failure to join Mary Todd at the Edwards home, January, 1841 — His letter to John T. Stuart — Invitation to John Hanks — Preparations for the marriage to Mary Todd — The story of the wedding — Judge Browne's amusing interruption — Conflicting views of Springfield people — Writer's visit to and interview with Ninian W. Edwards and wife — Refusal of Mrs. Simeon Francis to tell her story.

BEFORE I undertake to consider Lincoln as a lawyer, I venture to digress slightly in order that I may acquaint the reader with some of the things I have learned about him in another rôle. Adverting to the story of his activity and experience in the field of matrimony leads me to state that the honor which would have been Ann Rutledge's had she lived, and that Mary Owens and Sarah Rickard successively declined, was finally accepted by Mary Todd. Of all the women, contended Herndon, to whom Mr. Lincoln paid marked or serious attention, Mary Todd was, by far, the strongest, from an intellectual standpoint, and the most accomplished generally; and it only remains to add that she was also the only one whose keen vision penetrated the future and beheld in the homely face and awkward figure of her tall suitor the man of destiny.

No episode in Lincoln's life has occasioned greater diversity of opinion among the people of Springfield than the story of his marriage to Mary Todd as told by Herndon, who, in his account of the wedding, which was first scheduled to take place January 1, 1841, relates: "Nothing was lacking but the groom. For some strange reason he had been delayed. An hour passed and the guests as well as the bride were becoming restless. But they were all doomed to disappointment. Another hour passed;

messengers were sent out over town and, each returning with the same report, it became apparent that Lincoln, the principal in this little drama, had purposely failed to appear! The bride, in grief, disappeared to her room; the wedding supper was left untouched; the guests quietly and wonderingly withdrew; the lights in the Edwards mansion were blown out, and darkness settled over all for the night. What the feelings of a lady as sensitive, passionate, and proud as Miss Todd were we can only imagine — no one can describe them. By daybreak, after persistent search, Lincoln's friends found him. Restless, gloomy, miserable, desperate, he seemed an object of pity. His friends, Speed among the number, fearing a tragic termination, watched him closely in their rooms day and night. Knives and razors and every instrument that could be used for self-destruction were removed from his reach. . . . His condition began to improve after a few weeks, and a letter written to his partner, John T. Stuart, January 23, 1841, three weeks after the scene at the Edwards house, reveals more perfectly how he felt. He says: 'I am now the most miserable man living. If what I feel were equally distributed to the whole human family, there would not be one cheerful face on earth. Whether I shall ever be better, I cannot tell; I awfully forebode I shall not. To remain as I am is impossible. I must die or be better, as it appears to me. I fear I shall be unable to attend to any business here and a change of scene might help me. If I could be myself I would rather remain at home with Judge Logan. I can write no more.' "

Concerning this unusual if not dramatic episode in Lincoln's life, as described by Herndon, there remains

but little for me to say. In view of the divided sentiment among the Springfield people regarding it I can only assure the reader that I have no theory of my own to establish, and shall content myself by presenting as briefly as I can such facts as I have been able to gather in an honest and impartial endeavor to ascertain the truth.

As shown by the records of Sangamon County, Illinois, Abraham Lincoln and Mary Todd were married in Springfield, Friday, November 4, 1842. Nowadays the average couple would shirk from plighting their vows on such an unlucky day as Friday, but to this pair the day had no such terrors. The ceremony took place at the residence of Ninian W. Edwards whose wife was an elder sister of Miss Todd. It was here that the latter had made her home since her arrival from Kentucky in 1839. The groom had passed his thirty-third birthday and his bride was approaching her twenty-fourth. None of Mr. Lincoln's immediate family, including his father, stepmother, stepbrother and stepsisters, all of whom lived in Coles County, distant about seventy-five miles, were present. Whether invited or not no one seems to know. The only invitation emanating from Lincoln of which I ever heard was the following characteristic note sent by him to his favorite cousin, John Hanks, who lived near the town of Decatur and who was his companion on the famous flatboat expedition to New Orleans in 1831:

DEAR JOHN —

I am to be married on the 4th of next month to Miss Todd. I hope you will come over. Be sure to be on deck by early candle light. Yours

A. LINCOLN

I did not see this note in the original. A lady living near Decatur, and who said she was a granddaughter of John Hanks, furnished me a copy.

The marriage of Mr. Lincoln and Miss Todd was solemnized by the Reverend Charles Dresser, the first Episcopalian clergyman to settle in Springfield. It was also among the earliest services there in accordance with the Episcopalian ritual; for Parson Dresser had officiated at only eight marriages prior to this one. Of course all the participants as well as all the witnesses have passed away. Until recently one of the latter, the late Dr. William Jayne, was still living in Springfield. He was a boy at the time, and though not an invited guest was sent to the house where the marriage took place the evening of the wedding and saw the guests as they arrived. The groom had two best men or attendants in the persons of James H. Matheney, a deputy in the county clerk's office — later county judge — and Beverly Powell, salesman in the leading store, very popular and conceded to be the best-dressed man in town. A few years later he returned to his birthplace in Kentucky. The maids of honor attending the bride were Miss Julia Jayne, afterwards the wife of Lyman Trumbull, United States Senator, and Miss Anne Rodney, sister of the wife of William L. May, formerly Congressman from the Springfield district.

In my time it has been my privilege to meet and interview a number of persons, both men and women, who witnessed the marriage, but the most accurate and trustworthy account of what took place on that now memorable occasion is the recollection of James H. Matheney, who, as stated, was Mr. Lincoln's close friend as well as

groomsman. During my sojourn in Springfield many years ago I spent more than one pleasant afternoon with Judge Matheney. In the flower of his manhood he was in complete possession of all his faculties, and the facts were so fresh and so rigidly fixed in his mind he could recall with ease the minutest detail. Although generous in imparting his information, he had but one reservation and that was to refrain from making public some things he had communicated to me so long as he and the widow of Lincoln survived. As both have since passed away there can be no impropriety in putting on record the facts thus obtained.

The marriage was originally set for a day in the winter of 1840–41, probably New Year's Day, and Judge Matheney always insisted that he had been asked to serve as groomsman then; but Lincoln, for reasons unnecessary to detail here, having failed to materialize at the appointed time, an estrangement naturally followed and he was no longer enshrined in the affections of Miss Todd or *persona grata* at the Edwards home where, for a long time, she had been living. Without delving further into the merits of this luckless and regrettable episode, it suffices to add that in the course of time, through the intercession of the wife of Simeon Francis, editor of the "Springfield Journal," a reconciliation was effected and the couple duly brought together. Meanwhile, at frequent intervals, they were meeting each other as before, but never at the Edwards residence and probably without the knowledge of the Edwards family.

When the marriage was set for a second time it was planned to have it solemnized by the pastor at his own

house in the presence of a few close friends; but a day or so before the appointed time, when Mr. Edwards first heard of it, he hunted up Lincoln and earnestly protested on the ground that he was the natural protector of Miss Todd; that she was in reality a member of his family, and that the marriage ceremony should take place, if at all, at his home. After some argument Lincoln and Miss Todd were finally won over to his view of the case; but the time was short, and there was great activity and hurried preparations at the Edwards mansion in consequence.

At that early day Springfield, although the capital of the State, could not boast of a confectioner, and the regulation caterer had not yet come into vogue. The town had two so-called bakeries, one being a concern operated by John Dickey whose leading products were "gingerbread and beer." Of course a bride's cake must grace the wedding supper, but as the two bakeries were scarcely able within the required time to produce one suited to the occasion, recourse was had elsewhere. As a last resort the services of a lady renowned for her skill in that line, the wife of a Springfield lawyer, were secured, and in due time a cake of the regulation size and quality decked the festal board. Meanwhile, in view of the limited hours ahead, certain other essentials were assigned to willing and helpful hands, so that, as we are assured by a lady who was present, "Mrs. Edwards, despite the hurry, had provided an elegant and bountiful supper, and the wedding itself was pretty, simple, and impressive."

The attendance was limited, probably not over forty persons being present. "For a time after the guests arrived," related Judge Matheney, "there was more or less

stiffness about the affair due, no doubt, to the sudden change of plans and resulting 'town talk,' and I could not help noticing a certain amount of whispering and elevation of eyebrows on the part of a few of the guests, as if preparing each other for something dramatic or unlooked-for to happen. Things moved awkwardly — at least not naturally — until, during the ceremony, an interruption occurred so unusual and amusing it broke the ice, diverting the attention of the guests so effectually that the rest of the evening passed off literally as 'merry as a marriage bell.' In the company was a man named Thomas C. Browne, one of the judges of the Supreme Court of the State. He was a Tennesseean by birth, of the rough-and-ready order, corpulent as Falstaff, vain, coarse, and effusive. Despite his want of refinement, due to the lack of early training, he was, nevertheless, a good lawyer and a capable judge. During the ceremony, as provided by the ritual of the Episcopalian Church, Lincoln, the groom, placed the wedding ring on the bride's finger reciting very deliberately after the rector the words; 'With this ring I thee wed, and with all my worldly goods I thee endow.' To Browne, who stood near Lincoln and who, doubtless, had never before witnessed so elaborate and impressive a ceremony, the proceeding was ridiculous if not absurd; for, in a voice loud enough to be heard over the room, he blurted out, 'Lord A'mighty, Lincoln, the law fixes that!'"

And now at last, after numerous vicissitudes and strange chapters, Abraham Lincoln was safely married. A few days later he apprised his old friend Joshua F. Speed, then living in Louisville, and who, more than any other man, knew the inside of his courtship with Mary Todd,



JOSHUA F. SPEED AND HIS WIFE

of the auspicious beginning of his new life. "We are not keeping house," writes Lincoln, "but boarding at the Globe Tavern, which is very well kept by a widow lady of the name of Beck. Our room and boarding only costs us four dollars a week."

Mr. Herndon's version of the Lincoln-Todd courtship and wedding, as I have already stated, had the effect of evoking from many people in Springfield bitter criticism for his lack of taste in making the disclosure, and in some cases stout denial. The story first appeared in Ward Lamon's "Life of Lincoln," in which it was alleged that Lincoln disappointed Miss Todd, whom he had promised to wed, by failing to appear at the time and place agreed upon; that this led to an estrangement between them and that they remained apart for over a year or until reunited through the diplomatic instrumentality of Mrs. Francis. When I was in Springfield Herndon told me the story substantially as it appeared in the Lamon book and then advised me to interview Ninian Edwards and wife, both of whom were living and would no doubt communicate the facts as they recalled them. Accordingly a few days later, in obedience to the suggestion of Herndon, I visited the Edwards residence and found both husband and wife at home. This is what my diary records:

Thursday, Dec. 20, 1883.

Called on N. W. Edwards and wife. Asked about marriage Mary Todd to Lincoln — Mrs. E. said arrangements for wedding made — even cakes baked but Lincoln failed to appear. At this point Mr. Edwards interrupted — cautioned wife she was talking to newspaper man — she declined to say more — had said Mary greatly mortified by Mr. Lincoln's strange conduct. Later were reunited — finally married.

Herndon also furnished me the address of Mrs. Simeon Francis, who was then living in Oregon, and recommended that I apply to her for further information, as in view of her connection with the episode she could if she so desired relate the facts exactly as they occurred so that posterity might know the truth. Thus encouraged I wrote the lady three different times, reciting the story as it emanated from Herndon and others, and urging her in the interest of history to indicate whether Lincoln in his suit for the hand of Mary Todd had ignored the promise to meet her at the hymeneal altar on "that fatal 1st of January, 1841," or otherwise deceived her. She acknowledged the receipt of my letters, but in each case declined to deny the story or further enlighten me regarding the subject, on the ground that, as Lincoln and his wife were both dead, she felt a delicacy in disclosing to the world all the details of their courtship. I still have her letters.

CHAPTER VI

Lincoln's attitude toward the ladies — His attentions to Sarah Rickard — What Mary Owens said about him — His conduct in the parlor — The stag literary society — How he, with the aid of Evan Butler and James Matheney, punished the drunken shoemaker — His bashfulness — Whitney's account of his embarrassment before the ladies at Urbana — The evening at Norman B. Judd's residence — What Mrs. Judd recollected — Lincoln's break at the concert — His attentions to the lady performer — What Davis and Swett said to him about it — His reply.

JUDGED by the literature of the day thus far, the world seemingly has come to the conclusion that Lincoln was both an ideal lover and a model husband, and yet, if history can be depended upon, it does not always happen that a man so profoundly intellectual as he was makes an exemplary husband or in every case an adorable and satisfactory lover. He may be princely in demeanor and angelic in temperament, but, in the language of a lady to whom Lincoln himself once offered his hand, he is generally "deficient in those little links that make up the chain of a woman's happiness."

While Lincoln was far from the conventional ladies' man, yet no one more deeply appreciated the charms of female society. It was David Davis who said that on more than one occasion he had heard Lincoln "thank God that he was not born a woman." Now when Lincoln said this he had in mind his own sympathetic and pliant nature, and he therefore feared himself when subjected to the plausible arguments and persuasive influences which, it is said, so often sweep a woman off her feet. This line of reasoning may, perhaps, serve to indicate the esteem in which he held woman's will and powers of resistance; but

in saying what he did he certainly underrated his own strength and inflexibility, for we know that, when put to the test, no man ever lived who could say "no" more readily and abide by his decision with more resolution and firmness.

No doubt he longed for and enjoyed the attrition of social contact, and that included the company of the ladies, but even then we know he managed to hold himself in strict repression. Although a matchless story-teller and in other respects admirably entertaining, he was never prominent in the social life of early Springfield; but whether this was due to his shortcomings in the parlor and ballroom, his self-conscious lack of training generally, or to pure indifference, it is difficult to determine. Springfield, it should be remembered, though no larger or more important than the average inland prairie town in the early days of the West, had its aristocracy and social barriers as distinct and formidable as they are to-day. Evidence in support of this statement is found in a letter which Mr. Herndon once loaned me, written by Lincoln to Mary S. Owens, whose hand he sought in marriage. "There is a great deal of flourishing about in carriages here," he writes, "which it would be your doom to see without sharing in it. You would have to be poor without the means of hiding your poverty. Do you believe you could bear that patiently?"

In addition to Ann Rutledge, whose melancholy history, but for the indefatigable and exhaustive researches of Mr. Herndon, would probably never have been preserved, we know that, besides Mary Todd, Lincoln proposed also to Mary S. Owens and Sarah Rickard. With the story

of one of these *affaires de cœur* I am somewhat familiar, because through the assistance of Mr. Herndon I was enabled to obtain the desired information from original sources, for at that time the lady interested was living and easy of access. In her interview she related that Mr. Lincoln was an unusually interesting talker with many winning and even fascinating traits. Just how ardent and demonstrative in his professions of love he was, the lady's intuitive modesty restrained her from indicating; but she insisted that in his conduct toward her no one could have been more thoughtful and considerate. He was delicate and attentive to the point of gallantry; made her several beautiful presents; attended her at numerous social functions and escorted her to the various public entertainments of the period. She recalled their having witnessed a dramatization or rendition of "The Babes in the Wood," and he accompanied her to the first real theatrical performance, with the regulation stage and curtain, ever given in Springfield. Her name being Sarah, Lincoln, in pressing his suit, urged that because the Sarah of Bible times became the wife of Abraham, therefore, she, Sarah Rickard, in view of that precedent, was foreordained to marry Abraham Lincoln! Droll and curious though this argument was, the lady admitted that it was not without some weight in her own mind, but that it failed eventually to win her consent because of the objection of an elder sister who contended that she was too young to think seriously of matrimony. But even that probably was not the real reason; for, in a letter from her which now lies before me, Sarah herself says: "Mr. Lincoln became daily more attentive and I found I was beginning to like him;

but you know his peculiar manner and general deportment would not be likely to fascinate a young lady entering the society world."

In this connection it will not be out of order to mention that Joshua F. Speed, who was Lincoln's confidant in the affair with Mary Todd, furnished Herndon, after Lincoln's death, with copies of all the letters the latter had written him regarding that strange and tempestuous courtship. In transmitting the copies Speed asked that the name of a certain lady which was frequently mentioned therein should be omitted in case the letters ever became public. In due time they appeared in Lamon's "Life of Lincoln," but the name was carefully withheld. Not long since among some other papers I found Speed's original letter and thus learned that the name in question was "Sarah." In all probability it was Sarah Rickard, but why Speed wanted it omitted I have never been able to learn.

It is hardly fair to assume, because he spent his early days in the backwoods, that Lincoln was boorish or lacked the essentials of true politeness, and yet his conduct and bearing on some occasions were hardly calculated to win a woman's sincere admiration and approval. This is very clearly demonstrated by an incident narrated by Mary Owens, one of the two ladies to whom fate reserved the distinction of having declined Lincoln's hand. "On one occasion," she writes in a letter to Herndon, "we were going to a party at Uncle Billy Greene's. Mr. Lincoln was riding with me and we had a bad branch to cross. The other gentlemen were very officious in seeing that their partners got safely over. We were behind,



SARAH RICKARD



MARY S. OWENS

he riding in, never looking back to see how I got along. When I rode up behind him I remarked: 'You are a nice fellow! I suppose you did not care whether my neck was broken or not.' He laughingly replied (by way of compliment, I suppose) that he knew I was plenty smart to take care of myself."

Now Lincoln doubtless thought he was paying Miss Owens a delicate compliment when he credited her with "spunk" and judgment enough to look out for herself; but evidently the latter, whose notions of etiquette and propriety came from the refined associations of a wealthy Kentucky home, was not inclined to view his inattention in such a generous and forbearing light. And yet here is what she said of him in a letter to Herndon after Lincoln's death: "In many things Mr. Lincoln was sensitive to a fault. He told me this incident: He was crossing a prairie one day and saw before him a hog 'mired down,' to use his own language. He was rather 'fixed up' and resolved that he would pass on without looking at the shoat. After he had gone the feeling was irresistible and he had to look back; and the poor thing seemed to say wistfully: 'There, my last hope is gone!' Whereupon he got down and promptly relieved it from its difficulty."

While Lincoln has left us practically nothing from his pen by which to fix his real estimate of womankind, yet it cannot be truthfully said we are entirely without other sources of information. For instance, we know that, although given to the narration of an endless array of amusing and oftentimes equivocal stories, no man ever heard him question or reflect upon the "good name or fair fame"

of any individual woman. He detested and never would repeat neighborhood scandal. The savory morsels which some people find so toothsome and delicious under their tongues were wholly unpalatable to him. If he happened to narrate a story in which the wit or weakness of woman was a factor, it was invariably located in the wilds of Kentucky or southern Indiana or some other region equally remote. Besides, the story itself was so ingeniously told and the point or moral so obvious and suggestive, no one present could identify the heroine by name because no name was used or needed. Thus, it will be observed the reputation of every woman he knew was safe in his hands.

In the winter of 1838, along with Evan Butler, James Matheney, Milton Hay — John Hay's uncle — and other habitués of the court-house, Lincoln joined in organizing a debating or literary society which met, usually in the clerk's office, once and sometimes twice a month. It was strictly a stag affair, the ladies not being represented. Among other things a poem was contributed by Mr. Lincoln. Its title, if it had any, has been forgotten, but James Matheney, who served as secretary, was able when I last saw him to recall a few verses. Here is one stanza which I have in his handwriting:

> "Whatever spiteful fools may say,
> Each jealous ranting yelper,
> No woman ever went astray
> Without a man to help her."

Notwithstanding his characteristically indulgent and forbearing nature, Herndon always contended that Lincoln had less charity or patience than the average person for the man who abused his wife or in any other way ig-

nored his marriage vows. Not far from Hoffman's Row, the building in Springfield in which the early courts were held, lived a shoemaker who was given to the rather free use of intoxicants and who almost invariably wound up a spree by whipping his wife. One day Lincoln called the fellow aside, upbraided him for his brutality, and then admonished him that if he ever laid violent hands on his wife again a drubbing would be administered so vigorous he would not soon forget it. Meanwhile he apprised Evan Butler and James Matheney of his threat and invited them to join him in dealing out the requisite punishment if the offense should be repeated. "In due time," related Matheney to me, "the contingency arose. The drunken shoemaker had forgotten Lincoln's warning. It was late at night and we dragged the wretch to an open space back of a store building, stripped him of his shirt and tied him to a post. Then we sent for his wife, and arming her with a good stout switch bade her to 'light in' while the three of us sat on our haunches in solemn array near by to witness the execution of our judgment. The wife, a little reluctant at first, soon warmed up to her work, and emboldened by our encouraging and sometimes peremptory directions, performed her delicate task lustily and well. When the culprit had been sufficiently punished, Lincoln gave the signal 'Enough,' and he was released; we helped him on with his shirt and he shambled ruefully toward his home. For his sake we tried to keep all knowledge of the affair from the public; but the lesson had its effect, for if he ever again molested his wife we never found it out."

No better illustration of how Mr. Lincoln appeared socially, or rather how he demeaned himself in ladies'

company, is obtainable than the two incidents which follow, and which, while emphasizing some of his singular and characteristic traits, are also noteworthy in that they come from truthful and unquestioned sources. One of them was communicated to me both verbally and in writing by the late Henry C. Whitney. The testimony of this witness, with whom I spent many hours in Chicago after he had removed from Urbana, and who verified so much that Herndon had told me, is of the highest value, because, for almost ten years prior to Lincoln's election to the Presidency in 1860, he was much of the time in the latter's company as the two made their way from county to county on the circuit. "I well recollect," said Whitney, "that Mr. Lincoln was invited to join me and my wife at tea one evening at the residence of Mr. Boyden, the mayor of Urbana. He was in good spirits and seemed to be at perfect ease during the meal and afterwards, while I was in the room; but later I was called out for a short time to meet a client who was awaiting me at the front gate. When I returned, the party, meanwhile, having adjourned to the parlor, Mr. Lincoln's bearing and manner had entirely changed; for some unexplained reason he was laboring under the most painful embarrassment and appeared to be as demoralized and ill at ease as a bashful country boy. Drawn up in his chair and gazing alternately at the floor and ceiling, he would put his arms behind him and then bring them to the front again as if endeavoring in some way to hide them; meanwhile struggling, though in vain, to keep his long legs out of sight. His discomfiture was so plain and unmistakable I could not help pitying the poor fellow, and yet I could not

understand it unless it was because he was alone in a room with three women, for no one was present but Mrs. Boyden, my wife, and her mother." Evidently Sarah Rickard, who had declined to marry Lincoln, was not without a woman's intuitive discernment when she protested to Herndon that the former's "peculiar manner and general deportment were not calculated to fascinate a young lady entering the society world."

The second incident, which describes Lincoln under similar circumstances on another occasion, is equally well authenticated besides narrated by a woman herself. In September, 1857, Lincoln was in Chicago attending the United States Circuit Court where he was engaged in the trial of the noted Rock Island Bridge case. During his stay there he was invited to spend an evening at the home of Norman B. Judd, one of his valued friends, a lawyer and associated in the same case. Several ladies were present. What occurred and how Lincoln bore himself is so graphically and entertainingly told in an account written many years ago for Herndon by the wife of Mr. Judd, I feel that the portrait of Lincoln which I am trying to draw would be incomplete without it. After announcing the fact of Mr. Lincoln's arrival and describing the surroundings — they were sitting on the piazza in plain view of Lake Michigan with the full moon throwing "a flood of silvery light upon the dancing waves" — the writer undertakes to indicate the effect of the scene on her visitor.

"Mr. Lincoln, whose home," she writes, "was far inland from the Great Lakes, seemed stirred by the wondrous beauty of the scene and by its very impressiveness was carried away from all thoughts of the earth. In that

high-pitched but smooth-toned voice he began to speak of the mystery which for ages enshrouded and shut out those distant worlds above us from our own; of the poetry and beauty which was seen and felt by seers of old when they contemplated Orion and Arcturus as they wheeled seemingly around the earth in their mighty course; of the discoveries since the invention of the telescope which had thrown a flood of light and knowledge on what before was incomprehensible and mysterious; of the wonderful computations of scientists who had measured the miles of seemingly endless space which separated the planets in our solar system from our central sun and our sun from other suns which were now gemming the heavens above us with their resplendent beauty.

"When the night air became too chilly to remain longer on the piazza, we went into the parlor where, seated on the sofa his long limbs stretching across the carpet and his arms folded about him, Mr. Lincoln went on to speak of the discoveries and inventions which had been made during the long lapse of time between the present and those early days when man began to make use of the material things about him. He speculated upon the possibilities of the knowledge which an increased power of the lens would give in the years to come, and then the wonderful discoveries of late centuries, as proving that beings endowed with such capabilities as man must be immortal and created for some high and noble end by Him who had spoken these numberless worlds into existence.

"We were all indescribably impressed," continues Mrs. Judd, "by Mr. Lincoln's conversation. After he had gone Mr. Judd remarked: 'The more I see of Mr. Lincoln the

more I am surprised at the range of his attainments and the wonderful store of knowledge he has acquired in the various departments of science and learning during the years of his constant labor at the bar. A professor at Yale could not have been more entertaining and instructive.'"

Lincoln was never oracular, though when not unduly embarrassed he was easily the leader in conversation. Like all truly great men he was a good listener. He loved to slip away from his fellow lawyers, while out on the circuit, to attend a concert, panorama, or other like entertainment at the town hall or academy. He had an insatiable fondness for negro minstrelsy and seemed to extract the greatest delight from the crude jokes and harmless fun of the black-faced and red-lipped performers. Frequently, as if awakened from a spell of abstraction by something exuberantly funny, he would blurt out in a laugh louder than any one around him. Herndon told me that he and Lincoln, on their way homeward from the office one night, passed a public hall in which a church or benevolent society was giving an entertainment. They decided to go in. Although they entered the room at the same time, they were not seated together — Lincoln having slid over to a seat next to the wall and somewhat in the rear. Among other things on the programme they heard for the first time the story of "Miss Flora McFlimsy With Nothing to Wear" rendered by an elocutionist. The piece, then newly published and rather popular, was a long one, containing over three hundred lines of rhyme. In one place near the middle and not intended to be especially humorous, some one in the audience broke

out in a guffaw, as loud as it was sudden and unexpected. Everybody turned in his seat and gazed in the direction whence the disturbance came. There sat Lincoln looking sheepish and guilty. Something in the piece had struck his funny-bone and, despite his surroundings, had forced the interruption from him. Realizing that every eye was now focused on him he slid down in his seat and blushed like a school-girl.

Mr. Whitney told me that a company of singers known as the Newhall Family traveled over Illinois in *ante-bellum* times giving concerts. "If they struck a town where Lincoln happened to be," said Whitney, "he would invariably arrange his affairs so that he could be at the church or town hall in time to attend their entertainment. No trial, consultation, or business engagement of any kind was allowed to interfere. To most of us the thing for a time seemed more or less strange until finally the real reason developed. It was Lincoln's predilection for a woman. One of the performers was a Mrs. Hillis. She was not especially prepossessing in appearance, although a good singer, but she had somewhere made the acquaintance of Lincoln and appeared to manifest a decided fancy for him. She would give him a smile of recognition if she saw him in the audience, and the two often were seen talking to each other if they chanced to meet, as they sometimes did, at the tavern or elsewhere. The attraction was a little unusual for Lincoln, who was particularly thoughtful in matters of that kind. Finally when Judge Davis, Leonard Swett, and others equally close to him became aware of it, they began to prod him about it and with mock gravity ventured to remind him of his duty as

a married man, the danger of entangling alliances, etc. 'Don't trouble yourselves, boys,' was his retort; 'there 's no danger. She 's actually the only woman in the world, outside of my wife, who ever dared to pay me a compliment, and if the poor thing is attracted to my handsome face and graceful figure it seems to me you homely fellows are the last people on earth who ought to complain.' "

Mr. Whitney's account of the foregoing episode is confirmed by the testimony of no less a person than Mrs. Hillis herself. She was, as Mr. Whitney relates, a member of the Newhall Family, a somewhat noted company of singers which, in the fifties, made the rounds of the various towns in Illinois, Michigan, and Indiana, giving concerts extending over a period, sometimes of two days, and, in some instances, almost a week at a stretch. The troupe consisted of the parents, two sisters, a brother, and a brother-in-law. It was before the day of the modern railroad so that most of their traveling was done by stage or private conveyance. After her marriage Miss Newhall, the lady mentioned, bore the name Lois E. Hillis. Being an accomplished musician she frequently taught music and, late in the eighties, she communicated to William J. Anderson, one of her pupils, an account of her experiences as a concert performer which he promptly reduced to writing and carefully preserved. In her reminiscences Mrs. Hillis described her first meeting with Mr. Lincoln and how he impressed her and her sister as well as the other members of the concert company. She related that one evening at the hotel where Lincoln had for some time been a sojourner, one of the group of lawyers gathered there, anxious for a little fun at Lincoln's expense, arose and

exclaimed: "Now, Lincoln, you have been listening to and for almost a week enjoying the delightful music produced by these ladies, and it therefore only seems fair to the rest of us that you should, in turn, entertain them by singing some of the songs for which you are already famous." Of course this demand elicited the approval of everybody present, but it only served to evoke from Lincoln a refusal to comply. He protested that he had never sung a song in his life and loudly declared that he did not propose to jeopardize his reputation as a musician by attempting it then.

"Meanwhile, my sister and I," relates Mrs. Hillis, "were anxious that Mr. Lincoln should sing. Each of us, for some reason, had taken a great liking to him. We had, it is true, heard him speak several times, but that did not impress us so much as his pleasing personality and his happy manner toward women. He listened for a while to our urgent solicitation, and then, with a threatening look at the other lawyers who were enjoying his embarrassment, he turned on his heel and announced that as the hour was late he was going upstairs to bed. There was a melodeon in the room at which I was sitting, and just as he passed I looked up into his face and said:

" 'Mr. Lincoln, if you have a song that you can sing, I know that I can play the accompaniment. If you will just tell me what it is, I can follow you even if I am not familiar with it.'

"Although visibly embarrassed, he laughed and exclaimed:

" 'Why, Miss Newhall, if it would save my soul, I could n't imitate a note that you would touch on that in-

strument. I never sang in my life; and those fellows know it. They are simply trying to make fun of me!'

"Noticing my disappointment, he paused a moment and said:

" 'But I'll tell you what I am willing to do. Inasmuch as you and your sister have been so kind and entertained us so generously, I shall try to return the favor. Of course I can't produce music, but if you will be patient and brave enough to endure it, I will repeat for your benefit several stanzas of a poem of which I am particularly fond.'

"Then stepping to the doorway which led from the parlor to the stairway and leaning against the casing, for he seemed too tall for the frame, and half closing his eyes, he repeated the lines of 'O, Why Should the Spirit of Mortal Be Proud!'

"It was the first time we had ever heard Mr. Lincoln recite the poem, and it was, indeed, so impressive that when he had finished, all occasion for joking and raillery had passed away. I remember I was so deeply moved that I could scarcely restrain my tears. As he passed me on his way upstairs I ventured to ask him who wrote the poem.

" 'My dear Miss Newhall,' he answered, 'I regret to say that I do not know. But if you really like it, I will write it out for you to-night before I go to bed, and leave a copy on the table so that you may have it to read when you sit down to breakfast.'

"The next morning I was sitting at the breakfast-table eating by candlelight. I recall very distinctly that I was eating pancakes, and was in the act of cutting one, holding it with my fork while I wielded the knife, when I became

conscious that some one was behind and bending over me. A big hand took hold of my left hand, covering it on the table, and with his right hand, over my shoulder, he laid down a sheet of paper covered with writing, in front of my plate. I realized it was Mr. Lincoln. He told me that he was due to leave town in a few minutes, and as he moved away, he looked back, waved his hand, exclaiming, 'Good-bye, my dear!' and passed through the door. It was the last time I ever saw him."

CHAPTER VII

Lincoln's passion for women — How he dealt with them — Herndon's testimony — Interviewing one of Lincoln's female clients — Her story of his conduct — Lincoln on the circuit — Avoiding social functions — Fondness for concerts and like entertainments at the town hall — Accompanying Henry C. Whitney to the negro minstrel show in Chicago — Efforts of author to determine if Lincoln attended lecture by Thackeray in St. Louis — Lincoln's status as a married man — His wife's temperament and its effect on him — Her traits of character — Her management of the household — Her experience with Springfield tradesmen.

MENTION of Lincoln as a society or family man serves to recall some of the things illustrating that phase of his make-up which came to the surface before his intimates and professional brethren — the most competent of witnesses — had all passed away. Following is the written testimony of Herndon, of deep significance and value, because it is exactly as recorded by him:

"Mr. Lincoln had a strong, if not terrible passion for women. He could hardly keep his hands off a woman, and yet, much to his credit, he lived a pure and virtuous life. His idea was that a woman had as much right to violate the marriage vow as the man — no more and no less. His sense of right — his sense of justice — his honor forbade his violating his marriage vow. Judge Davis said to me in 1865, 'Mr. Lincoln's honor saved many a woman,' and this is true to the spirit. This I know on my own knowledge. I have seen Lincoln tempted and I have seen him reject the approach of woman."

In this connection I venture to relate an experience of my own. One day in Springfield I was sitting in the room which Lincoln, for a few days prior to his removal to

Washington in February, 1861, had used as an office, when I was joined by Mr. Herndon who had asked me to meet him there. In due time our conversation drifted toward Lincoln, a subject of such intense and engaging interest that sunset found us still absorbed in the discussion of that great and marvelous character. Herndon did most of the talking, nor did he manifest the slightest sign of impatience at the fusillade of curious and unusual questions I asked him. I remember among other things how admirably he enlightened me regarding Mr. Lincoln's moral and professional standards, his personal habits, his conduct and bearing in court, including the narration of some of his apt and incomparable stories. He even went so far as to imitate Lincoln's voice and gesture in the delivery of a speech. To me it was a revelation so vivid and fruitful I felt, when we separated for the day, almost as if I had been in Lincoln's presence.

"In order that you may judge of Mr. Lincoln's habits in dealing with people professionally," said Herndon, "including his demeanor and conduct toward the fair sex, and thus enable you to determine how near the truth my estimate of the man is, I am going to send you to a woman who was once a client of ours and who, if you succeed in finding her and induce her to talk, can tell you how Mr. Lincoln behaved as a man and lawyer as well as how he treated her." Mr. Herndon further explained that at an early day the woman, handicapped by a shady reputation, had landed in court charged with keeping a house of ill-repute or some like offense, had counseled with Lincoln and himself and retained them to represent her. "She is well along in years," continued Herndon, "and although I have not seen

her for a long time I have been assured on reliable authority that now and for some time past she has been leading a correct and becoming life."

In compliance with Mr. Herndon's suggestion I started out in search of the woman and after diligent inquiry located her. At first, when I sought to interrogate her, she was somewhat reticent if not really unresponsive, but when I explained that Mr. Herndon had sent me to see her with the assurance that her name should not be used, she gradually relented and eventually answered all my questions. She admitted that she had employed Lincoln and Herndon to look after her interests when her case came up in court. The first thing done was to ask for a change of venue, which, having been granted, she and the witnesses, some of whom were female inmates of her own household, others sundry gentlemen of gay and sportive tendency, were obliged to travel a short distance over the country to another court. "There was a good crowd of us," she related, "and a livelier delegation never drove over the prairies. As to the behavior and actions of Mr. Lincoln, I must say it was in every respect correct so that I can recall nothing improper or out of place about it. Of course he talked to me a good deal, and for that matter to the other ladies too."

"Where and when was it he talked to you?" I asked.

"Sometimes in the office, sometimes in the court-house, and sometimes elsewhere."

"Did he ever talk with you alone?"

"Yes, I have frequently been in his office and spoken to him when no one else was there."

"What did he talk about?"

"Usually about business; also many other things that

suggested themselves. The truth is he was an interesting talker on all subjects."

"How did he conduct himself? Was he agreeable?"

"To me he seemed always a gentleman. I could see nothing wrong or unpleasant about him."

"Did you hear him tell any stories?"

"Yes; a good many."

"Were any of these stories told when you and he were alone?"

"Yes; and I remember that he told some when one or more of the ladies who accompanied me were present."

"What kind of stories were they?"

"Various kinds. Of course I can't describe them now, but I remember that they were all very much alike in one particular and that is that they were usually funny."

"Were any of them suggestive or objectionable?"

"No, I do not think they were."

"Then what would you say about their propriety; that is, would you consider what he said unfit to be told in polite society or in the company of ladies?"

The last question was evidently more or less of a tax on the old woman's memory or perhaps her conception of propriety; for she hesitated a few moments, as if buried in thought, before she answered; but she soon rallied and then responded:

"No, although some of the things he said were very amusing and made me as well as the others laugh, I do not think it would be fair to call them improper; in fact, I believe they could with safety have been told in the presence of ladies anywhere." At this point the witness halted again, but only an instant; for she promptly recovered her

equanimity and concluded her testimony with the following emphatic and sententious declaration which I have never forgotten: "But that is more than I can say for Bill Herndon."

While out on the circuit the lawyers of Lincoln's day were frequently invited to spend the evening at some hospitable home, attend a ball, or take part in the various social functions of that period. Judge Davis was a frequent attendant, but Lincoln avoided them whenever he could. The interchange of ideas and small talk generally one encounters on such occasions seemed to have no charm for him. "I have known him," said Whitney, "to sit in his room all alone an entire evening while the rest of us were away at a ball or party somewhere, and when we returned we would find him rolled up and sound asleep in his bed. The only place besides the tavern or some inviting lawyer's office he cared to visit of an evening was a public entertainment at the town hall, and even in that event he would often try to slip away from the rest of us so that on his arrival there he could drop into a seat in an obscure nook or corner of the room and enjoy the show without being seen."

Mr. Lincoln's partiality for the time-honored concert or dramatic exhibition at the academy or town hall — a predilection so pronounced that David Davis and certain other friends could never agree whether it was a weakness or only a peculiarity — calls to mind another penchant of his, and that is the conventional negro minstrel show. Of this type of entertainment, which I have alluded to before, he was inordinately fond. "In the latter part of March, 1860," wrote Mr. Whitney to me several years ago, "I re-

member Mr. Lincoln was in Chicago attending the United States Court, where I met him. It was less than two months before the convention which nominated him for President. Three tickets to Rumsey and Newcomb's Minstrels, a high-toned troupe, having been presented to me, I hunted up Lincoln and asked him if he would like to go to a 'nigger show' that night. He assented rapturously exclaiming: 'Of all things I would rather do to-night that certainly is one.' He and I witnessed the performance and I never saw him enjoy himself more than he did that night. He applauded as often as anybody and with greater animation. The nondescript song and dance of 'Dixie' was sung and acted by the troupe, the first time I ever saw it, and probably the first time it was sung and acted in Illinois. I can remember well the spontaneity of Lincoln's enthusiasm and the heartiness of his applause at the music and action of this rollicking and anomalous performance. Little did we think that this weird and harmless melody would erelong be transformed into a fierce battle-cry by whose inspiration slaughter and carnage would be carried into the ranks of those who bared their bosoms to save the nation's life. Little did we think of this as he clapped his great brawny hands in true rustic heartiness and exclaimed in riotous enthusiasm: 'Let's have it again! Let's have it again!'"

Several years ago my friend General James Grant Wilson, of New York, a great admirer of the renowned Thackeray, and who was then at work on his book "Thackeray in the United States," wrote me a letter in which he said that Thackeray gave one of his readings before a crowded house in St. Louis March 26, 1856, and it had been reported that

Lincoln was in the audience. Having been told that Lincoln occasionally visited St. Louis, General Wilson, trusting that the report was true, was anxious to state in his book that the former was present and heard the famous Englishman deliver his lecture to a St. Louis audience; but before committing himself he took the precaution to write to me asking me to make careful inquiry and report to him whether he could make the desired statement and be safely within the bounds of truth. Unless it could be shown that Lincoln was on hand and heard Thackeray as indicated, General Wilson said he preferred not to mention the incident. In due time I set out to learn the truth, making a thorough and industrious canvass. I interviewed all the few remaining friends and associates of Lincoln, then living in Springfield or elsewhere, that I could find who were in a position to know the facts, but was unable to find one who could recall the circumstance or otherwise enlighten me. Not content with personal interviews I patiently examined the files of the Springfield and St. Louis papers, only to realize that they, too, were void of information. Unfortunately it was after the death of Mr. Herndon so that I was unable to obtain the testimony of one witness whose credibility as well as competency could not be questioned. Among other things I examined the records of the various courts Lincoln was in the habit of attending, hoping thereby to determine Lincoln's whereabouts on March 26, 1856 — the date mentioned by General Wilson; but they failed to reveal anything of great moment or value beyond the fact that a document in Lincoln's handwriting, a declaration or bill, was filed in the Circuit Court at Bloomington, Illinois, dated

March 28, 1856. But this was far from conclusive, for it did not necessarily follow that he was in Bloomington that day, much less did it prove that he was in St. Louis listening to Thackeray's lecture on George III two days before.

My inquiry was so vigorous and persistent that it was not long until almost every old friend of Lincoln in Springfield had been subjected to an interview and thus learned what I was striving to accomplish. This was especially true of the older generation of lawyers, all of whom seemed deeply interested and generously coöperated with me in my quest of the truth. I recall one man, close to Lincoln, who was of material aid to me. One day he ventured to ask me who or what it was that prompted me to dig into the matter so deeply; also, in case I reached a definite and satisfactory conclusion, what I purposed doing with the information thus obtained. I told him I had been asked to make the investigation by a literary gentleman in New York who wished to know whether Lincoln while in St. Louis on one occasion attended a lecture by the talented English writer Thackeray, but that after careful and patient inquiry I was unable to determine whether he was actually present and heard the lecture or not.

"Tell your literary friend," he said, "that you have talked with a man in Springfield who, for many years, was a close friend of Lincoln and who insists that if he, Lincoln, was in St. Louis and the wonderful Mr. Thackeray was billed to lecture in one public hall and Campbell's or Rumsey's Negro Minstrels were to hold forth in another hall on the same evening, it would have been folly to look for Lincoln at the lecture. Instead of the latter the 'nigger show' would have caught him every time."

The marriage of Mr. Lincoln and Mary Todd was, indeed, an important and eventful chapter in the lives of both. Whether it was a wise and judicious union is a question on which the people of Springfield have never been able to agree. A few persons — and among them are some of Lincoln's closest friends — were disposed to look upon it as a piece of accidental good fortune. Their theory was that Lincoln's success and political ascendancy was due more to the influence of his wife than to any other single agency; that her unrestrained temper, her willful and turbulent nature effectually debarred him from the full measure of domestic happiness — in other words, forced him out into the angry sea of politics and public applause. Instead of evenings engrossed in the comforts of his own fireside, he was a great part of the time away from his home, discussing public questions with the politicians and lawyers, who thronged the offices in the court-houses, exchanging views with and telling stories to the farmers at the stores or the loungers at the tavern, and otherwise mingling with his fellow citizens of every grade, rank, and station. The result of this continuous rubbing of elbows with the so-called plain people was that Lincoln in the course of time was more generally and widely known than almost any other man in his part of the country. His wife, therefore, was a material though possibly an unintentional aid in his promotion.

If, on the other hand, as contended by certain of his friends, he had married some more placid and adjustable woman, one who would have been content to minister and defer to him because of his acknowledged intellect and brilliant promise of leadership, the result, doubtless, would

have been different. For although it would have been the wife's delight to see that he had clean clothes when he needed them; that his slippers were in their accustomed place; that he was warmly clad and had plenty to eat; and although the privilege of ministering to his wants may have been to her a pleasure rather than a duty; yet the probability is he would have been satisfied with the modest emoluments of a country lawyer's practice, deaf to the siren call of politics, and buried in the delights of an inviting and happy home. Such, at least, was the opinion of Herndon, whose theory thus expressed was confirmed by David Davis, Milton Hay, and James Matheney, three close, unerring, and loyal friends of Lincoln, and with all of whom I talked regarding the latter's domestic history.

Judge Davis laid great stress on the fact that Lincoln seemed to prefer life on the circuit because it occasioned prolonged absence from his home. He told me that on the circuit the lawyers as the week neared its close were in the habit of expediting business so as to be able to leave at the earliest moment and thus reach home in time to spend Sunday with their families. They all went but Lincoln; he was proverbially slow and would linger behind pleading an accumulation of unfinished business or something equally commonplace and improbable as an excuse for not going. The next Monday, when the other lawyers returned, they would invariably find Lincoln still there anxiously awaiting their reappearance. It was more or less unusual. Davis professed to believe that "Lincoln was not happy domestically," in proof of which he alluded to the fact that often as he had been in Springfield Lincoln had never enter-

tained him, nor, so far as he could learn, any other visiting lawyer at his home.

Speaking of Lincoln and his wife Milton Hay, the uncle of John Hay, said: "If he had married a woman of more angelic temperament and less social ambition, he, doubtless, would have remained at home more and been less inclined to mingle with the people outside. She had a very extreme temper and made things at home more or less disagreeable. This probably encouraged Mr. Lincoln to seek entertainment elsewhere. Mentally she was a bright woman with decided aristocratic pretensions, but she was of very saving habits. In dealing with others she was very determined; not easily moved or thoughtful about what she should say or do."

Judge Matheney agreed with Davis and Hay. He told me also that although in worldly matters Lincoln was as prudent and careful as the average man, yet he never succeeded in acquiring very much property. Compared to his second partner, Stephen T. Logan, David Davis, and a few other associates of like standing at the bar, he was poor. At the time of his election in 1860 the house in which he lived was the only real estate he possessed and his personal accumulations did not exceed ten thousand dollars. His tastes were proverbially simple; he indulged in no excesses and his expenditures were kept at the minimum. His wife, on the other hand, had a weakness for certain luxuries, but they were modest and only few in number. She loved fine clothes, but in other respects she was close and in no sense extravagant. In support of Judge Matheney's testimony illustrating the economical trait in the Lincoln family, I was shown a book kept by a Springfield

merchant containing the Lincoln account. I copied the record of purchases made by Mrs. Lincoln in 1860 during the greater part of which year her husband was engaged in his canvass for the Presidency. A list of the items will not only serve to indicate the character and extent of her outlay, but also prove to be of more or less interest to the ladies; especially those who are prone to wonder what change, if any, in his wife's conduct or style of living a man's elevation to the Presidency brings about.

In the case of Mrs. Lincoln the following entry is a record of her first purchase after the news of her husband's nomination at Chicago:

Abraham Lincoln	
To 1 Silk Parasol	$5.00
" 11 y'ds Calico	$1.38

Meanwhile the need of more elaborate raiment with which to bedeck the first lady of the land began to assert itself. Accordingly, a few days later, occurs this:

A. Lincoln per wife	
To 1 Mantle	$18.00
" 8½ yds Cable Cord	1.06
" 1 pair Kid Gloves	.85

And this:

Mrs. A. Lincoln	
To 1 Eng. Straw Bonnet	$5.00
" 1 Rouch	.25
" 23 yds Cotton Flannel	3.83
" 2 Hats	1.50
" 1¼ yds Pld. Linen	.66

As the summer wore on came this:

Hon. A. Lincoln	
To 6¼ yds Bon Silk	$5.31
" 9 " Thread Edg.	2.25
" ⅛ " Linen Cambric	.75

And shortly before election day, this:

Abraham Lincoln	
To 3 yds Plaid Satteen	.75
" 1 Silk French Umbrella	5.75
" 1 Straw Tassel	.25

The last entry, dated December 31, was recorded only a few days before Lincoln left Springfield for Washington and included these items:

A. Lincoln	
To 1 Wh. Rouch	.60
" 1 " "	.20
" 1 BB "	.40
" 1¾ yds French Merino	1.75
" ¾ " Marcelline	.45
" Sewing Silk	.25

Another tradesman's account book I examined was that of a druggist, the man who supplied the Lincolns with their "medicines, perfumes, and hair tonics." I append this list bought in 1852:

A. Lincoln	
Aug. 7 To Prescription	.15
" 11 " Cal Powders	.10
" 14 " Pennyroyal	.10
" 23 " Bot. Carminative	.25
" 30 " " "	.50

Farther along in the book I found and copied numerous items added to the Lincoln account, but when the owner, who gave me the book to examine, observed that I had reached the page on which was entered, "1 Bottle Brandy," charged to Lincoln, he asked for its return and declined to allow me to copy further. I remember an entry in one place showing the sale of a bottle of perfume beneath which was penciled this notation: "Returned by Mrs. L.,"

which prompted a gentleman who accompanied me to relate that his father, who was formerly connected with the store, told him that he was once instructed by the proprietor not to honor Mrs. Lincoln's order for perfume because she had so often broken the seals and, through a messenger, returned bottles of the preparation she had opened, claiming that the contents were inferior or otherwise not as represented, and thus preventing their sale to others.

"Notwithstanding her love of fine apparel," is the statement of a lady relative, "Mrs. Lincoln was not only economical, but close; but in order that she might gratify her passion for the ornamental her economy and self-denial ended at the kitchen. As a rule servants were conspicuous about her household only when she entertained. She was not noted for her skill as a cook, but was unusually neat with the needle. She had an ungovernable temper, but after the outburst she was invariably regretful and penitent."

My inquiry into the domestic history of the Lincolns in Springfield convinced me that Mrs. Lincoln was, in some respects, of great value to her husband, in that she protected him from imposition. "She was an excellent judge of human nature," said Herndon; "a better reader of men's motives than her husband and quick to detect those who had designs upon and sought to use him. She was, in a good sense, a stimulant. Firm in her belief that he would ultimately attain immortal fame she kept him from lagging, was constantly prodding him to keep up the struggle. She coveted place and power; wanted to be a leader in society, and her ambition knew no bounds. Re-

alizing that Lincoln's rise in the world would elevate and strengthen her, she strove in every way to promote his fortunes, to keep him moving, and thereby win the world's applause."

CHAPTER VIII

Further accounts of Mrs. Lincoln — Herndon's account of the dance with her — The serenade — Riding with the Bradfords — Her difficulties with the servants — Her husband's ingenious scheme to retain them — The government of the children — Lincoln taking them to the office on Sunday — His control over them — Playing chess with Judge Treat — An interesting glimpse by a law student — Description of the office — How Lincoln dressed — How he spent the day — His habits of study — Escorting Mrs. Lincoln to a ball — Her husband's consideration for her — His action when a storm threatened.

OUTSIDE of her husband and kindred it is fair to assume that Mr. Herndon knew Mrs. Lincoln more thoroughly and comprehended her peculiar construction better than almost any other person in Springfield. The popular notion fathered by numerous writers that the two were hostile to each other and at outs most of the time has no sure foundation on which to rest. That they did not invariably and completely agree on all subjects is doubtless true, but it does not necessarily follow that they hated each other. In fact the correspondence between them, much of which I have been privileged to read, as well as the many facts I gathered during my association with Mr. Herndon, convince me to the contrary. I cannot, therefore, resist the conclusion, regardless of the things which have found their way into the columns of some of our newspapers and magazines, that Mr. Herndon and Mrs. Lincoln, all things considered, held each other in generous and reasonable esteem.

"Mary Todd," wrote Mr. Herndon, "was a woman of more than average attainments, having had the benefit of a thorough education, excellent social training, and the most refined surroundings. She was a good writer, could



MARY TODD LINCOLN

express her thoughts in chaste and perfect English; understood French and was otherwise highly endowed. Of all the ladies to whom Mr. Lincoln paid court she was undoubtedly the most versatile and accomplished. An animated and interesting talker, she was also a shrewd observer, and in some respects a better and more intuitive judge of men than her husband. But unfortunately for her and those with whom she came in contact, she seemed to lack the very elements calculated to win the reverence and retain the affection of a man of Mr. Lincoln's type. Not entirely free from an appearance of haughty disdain, she was devoid of patience, tolerance, and self-control. In her letters, some of which were addressed to me and others which I have read, she invariably speaks of her husband in the most endearing and affectionate language; and yet I am sure her fearless, austere, and caustic nature greatly marred the blissful companionship which should have existed between her and her imperturbable and kindly natured helpmate."

Miss Todd came to Springfield from her Kentucky home about the time the place became the capital of the State, and she was promptly and cordially welcomed into the highest and most approved social circles. A comely and attractive figure she soon had a number of admirers. Among the latter was Mr. Herndon, who was about her age. This is his account of their first meeting: "It was at an evening party and I danced with her. I was charmed with her, and after the dance I thought it would be seemly and proper to compliment her on her superb poise and graceful bearing, meanwhile suggesting that her movements on the floor, as she glided through the waltz, were

fairly serpentine — alluding, of course, to the ease with which a serpent, gracefully turning corners and making its way around obstructions, moves over the ground. Of course it was a hideous and unpardonable comparison, and later, when I became better acquainted with the lady and her responsive temperament, I used to wonder how I happened to escape so well; for, strange to say, she simply drew back and glared at me a moment — with a look too I shall never forget — and moved to another part of the room."

The recollection by Judge Matheney of Mrs. Lincoln was equally vivid and interesting because, in view of his intimacy with Mr. Lincoln, he was in a position to learn things which, but for his keen observation and wonderful memory, might not have been preserved. Here is one incident he related to me in March, 1883, which was before Herndon's death:

"Soon after Miss Todd came to Springfield our crowd of young fellows decided to serenade her — a custom very much in vogue in those days. We had flutes, violins, and other old-time instruments and produced what we regarded as very creditable music. The next evening Miss Todd attended a social gathering where she met a young man — his name was Peck, I believe — who was a member of the party of musicians that serenaded her the night before. On being introduced to him she indulged in several sneering allusions to the music and mentioned that she had met him before, referring, of course, to the serenade. Stung to the quick by her uncomplimentary and sarcastic suggestion Peck was nevertheless equal to the emergency. 'That music,' he retorted, 'was not intended for you, Miss Todd; that was for Sally' — the colored servant at the Edwards mansion."

John S. Bradford, at one time State Printer, told me this incident in his office in Springfield and I made a note of it at the time: "Some years ago when I had invested in my first carriage I invited Mrs. Lincoln to accompany me and my family in a drive to the country. We drove to the Lincoln residence, and when the madame came down the front steps to join us in the carriage, she appeared to be very nervous and more or less wrought up. What had caused her agitation she failed to disclose. We suspected that there had been a collision or disagreement of some kind with her servant, for, just as she settled back in her seat, she exclaimed with a sigh: 'Well, one thing is certain; if Mr. Lincoln should happen to die, his spirit will never find me living outside the boundaries of a slave State.'"

Among the people of Springfield, rich and poor alike, those who opposed as well as those who supported his political principles, Lincoln, so far as I could determine, was held by his fellow citizens in unquestioned esteem. In my long sojourn there I found but one man who condemned or even belittled him. That man, I regret to say, was the one who related the incident just described. For a long time I could not understand it; but finally, through Herndon, I learned the reason. In March, 1842, Lincoln was retained by one William Darmody and brought suit against Bradford for slander, the grievance being that the latter had publicly denounced Darmody, characterizing him as a "damned rogue." Lincoln lost the suit, and although he conducted the case with due regard to the professional ethics involved, as shown by the record, Bradford never forgave him. This explains why Bradford could not agree with his neighbors and thus endeavor to

find in Lincoln's life and morals something to commend.

Reverting to a further contemplation of Mrs. Lincoln, it may not be out of place to suggest that, as a rule, she experienced the utmost difficulty in retaining a household servant beyond a brief or nominal period. On account of her frequent and violent outbursts of temper, she was in bad repute with the domestic servant population of Springfield. At the joint suggestion of Mr. Herndon and Judge Matheney I met and talked with a woman who claimed in her girlhood days to have lived as a servant in the Lincoln household. When she entered Mrs. Lincoln's employ she had been apprised, she said, of that lady's peculiarities, and was warned that, like the other girls who had preceded her at the Lincoln home, a few days, possibly a month at the most, would mark the limits of her stay; but, to the surprise of all, she remained a much longer period, in fact, upwards of two years. The secret of her steady and unbroken service came out with the explanation that Lincoln himself gave her additional compensation each week — generally a dollar — conditioned on her determination to brave whatever storms that might arise. This arrangement was discreetly kept from Mrs. Lincoln, but that extra payment each week gave the servant the requisite courage, whenever she and Mrs. Lincoln happened to clash, as they sometimes did. "At last, however," said the woman, "the madame and I began to understand each other. More than once, when she happened to be out of the room, Mr. Lincoln with a merry twinkle in his eye patted me on the shoulder urging me to 'Stay with her, Maria; stay with her.'"

Over his household Lincoln exercised no supervision of any kind. The government of the family or domestic

machine was entirely in the hands of his wife. His children did much as they pleased. Many of their antics he ostensibly approved and he restrained them in nothing. He never reproved nor gave them a fatherly frown. Parental discipline or punishment, if needed, had to come from another source.

"He was the most indulgent parent," is the testimony of Mr. Herndon, "I have ever known. When at home on Sunday he frequently brought his two younger sons, William and Thomas, or 'Tad,' down to our office while his wife was at church. The boys were absolutely unrestrained in their amusements. If they withdrew all the books from the shelves, bent the points of the pens, overturned the inkstands, scattered papers over the floor, or threw pencils into the spittoon, it never disturbed their father's serenity or good nature. Absorbed in thought he apparently never observed their mischievous and destructive pranks, and even if brought to his attention he virtually encouraged their repetition by failing to manifest the least sign of impatience or disapproval.

"Mr. Lincoln could sometimes be seen, also on Sunday, in his shirt-sleeves drawing his children in a little wagon up and down the pavement in front of his house. So abstracted and lost to the surroundings was he that if, perchance, one of the little fellows happened to roll overboard, as they sometimes did, he would pull steadily ahead, his eyes fixed on the ground, in a brown study regardless of the child's lamentations. His attention being called to the mishap by a passer-by, he would turn back, pick up the youngster, try to soothe or pacify it, and then resume his perambulation as unconcernedly as if nothing unusual

had happened. But at this juncture Mrs. Lincoln would be espied a few steps down the street, hastening home from church. Almost instantly there would follow a loud protest from a woman's shrill and angry voice. The scene would change. All steps now turn to the Lincoln mansion. The front door swings open and an abashed but indulgent father, looking neither to the right nor left, hastens up the steps and disappears within."

In the winter of 1883 I spent a good portion of one afternoon with a gentleman who was present and heard Lincoln's first oral argument before the Supreme Court of Illinois. It was Samuel H. Treat, who had himself been on the Supreme bench and at the time of my visit was serving as Judge of the United States District Court. His recollection of the political campaign of 1846, when Lincoln defeated the redoubtable Peter Cartwright for Congress, was to me an especially interesting chapter. He said he admired Lincoln and he entertained me with several vivid and characteristic episodes in which the latter figured. I tried to draw out his opinion of Mrs. Lincoln, but with poor success, for, beyond the simple admission that he was acquainted with her coupled with the names of three or four other persons who, he claimed, could adequately describe her "if they dared to," he declined to commit himself.

On the afternoon just mentioned when I visited him Judge Treat told me, among other things, that one morning Lincoln came to his office and joined him in a game of chess. The two were enthusiastic chess-players and when the opportunity offered indulged in the game. On the occasion named they were soon deeply absorbed, nor did they

realize how near it was to the noon hour until one of Lincoln's boys came running in with a message from his mother announcing dinner at the Lincoln home, a few steps away. Lincoln promised to come at once and the boy left; but the game was not entirely out; yet so near the end the players, confident that they would finish in a few moments, lingered a while. Meanwhile almost half an hour had passed. Presently the boy returned with a second and more urgent call for dinner; but so deeply engrossed in the game were the two players they apparently failed to notice his arrival. This was more than the little fellow could stand; so that, angered at their inattention, he moved nearer, lifted his foot, and deliberately kicked board, chessmen, and all into the air. "It was one of the most abrupt, if not brazen, things I ever saw," said Treat, "but the surprising thing was its effect on Lincoln. Instead of the animated scene between an irate father and an impudent youth which I expected, Mr. Lincoln without a word of reproof calmly arose, took the boy by the hand, and started for dinner. Reaching the door he turned, smiled good-naturedly, and exclaimed, 'Well, Judge, I reckon we'll have to finish this game some other time,' and passed out. Of course I refrained from any comment," continued Treat, who, by the way, was old and had never been blessed with a child, "but I can assure you of one thing: if that little rascal had been a boy of mine he never would have applied his boots to another chessboard."

Lincoln was a man of marked personality. He was generous and sympathetic; was willing to help if help was needed, but in manner restrained and somewhat slow to

volunteer. The recipient of every one's confidence he rarely gave his own in return. People oftentimes mistook his dignified composure for indifference.

"If a man betrayed undue familiarity," said Herndon, "Mr. Lincoln drew about himself a shield, a sort of charmed circle which effectually barred too near approach. Though oftentimes abstracted, he was not repellent; but there was something in his face and manner that restrained even the boldest and most venturesome man. It can hardly be said that he had a confidant nor did he unbosom himself to others. Notwithstanding the long and close association between us, if a cloud hovered over and depressed him, as it unfortunately sometimes did, he made no mention of it, and I am sure that I was equally careful to refrain from alluding to it in his presence. To me he was ever imperturbable and mysterious. If in Springfield, and not out on the circuit, he usually reached our office about nine in the morning, although, sometimes, he came as early as seven; and on one or two occasions I recall he was there soon after daylight. The cause of these early appearances at the office could not be learned from anything he said, but that did not prevent me from making deductions of my own. The main piece of furniture in the office was an old sofa or lounge on which he would throw himself, one foot on a chair, the other on the edge of the table, and begin to read. Stretched out thus and generally reading aloud, he would succeed in monopolizing practically a fourth of the room. After a while he would exclaim, 'Billy' — he always called me Billy — and begin to relate a circumstance suggested by something he had been reading and which had happened in Indiana or 'down in Egypt.' That incident would lead

to another and still another, and the array of stories would follow each other until a large part of the morning was thus consumed. His narratives were almost invariably so witty and amusing they kept all of us in the office laughing, a result which no one enjoyed more heartily than he. At two o'clock he would return to the office. If no important or pressing matters claimed his time, he would draw his chair up to the table on which rested his elbow, place his chin in the palm of his hand, his gaze fixed on the floor or through the window into space, and linger thus absorbed for hours or until interrupted by callers or the demands of his profession. On these occasions he was grave, taciturn, unresponsive. But the most significant and noteworthy thing about him was his look of abstraction and melancholy. It was as painful as it was inescapable. I have often watched him in one of these moods. Bent over in his chair, lost to the world in thought, he was the most striking picture of dejection I had ever seen. When in one of these moody spells neither of us spoke. Occasionally it would become necessary to trouble him with a question without eliciting a response. Meanwhile I would forget that I had asked him; but to my surprise a few moments later (once it was over fifteen minutes) he would break the silence and give me an appropriate and satisfactory answer. Apparently he had, for the time, pushed my question aside.

"A large part of the time he read aloud. It annoyed me more or less, and I sometimes left the room under pretense of a call elsewhere if I suspected a long chapter ahead; but he was my senior by almost ten years and so much superior in every other respect I would not for the world have given evidence of any objection or even indifference.

I remember once in answer to my inquiry why he read aloud he said: 'I catch the idea by two senses; for, when I hear what is said and also see it, I remember it better even if I do not understand it better.' At his home when reading he would lie on the floor, his head resting against a chair placed upside down, the inclined surface serving as a pillow. He was not a general reader, save in his endeavor to keep abreast of the times through the developments in the political world. In quest of knowledge or information his reading seemed to be characterized by marked concentration of thought, the study of some special subject — in other words, his reading like his efforts in other lines always had a definite end in view. He was practical, strong, and reflective."

A faithful and interesting glimpse of Lincoln comes from Gibson W. Harris, a student in his office after the dissolution of the partnership with Judge Logan, and who later moved to Cincinnati where he lived many years.

"In 1845," relates Harris, "I was inducted into the office of Lincoln & Herndon as student and clerk. The office was in a room in the upper floor of a building which housed the post-office. Across the hall the Clerk of the United States District Court held forth. The furniture, somewhat dilapidated, consisted of one small desk and a table, a sofa or lounge with a raised head at one end, and a half-dozen plain wooden chairs. The floor was never scrubbed. If cleaned at all it was done by the clerk or law student who occasionally ventured to sweep up the accumulated dirt. Over the desk a few shelves had been enclosed; this was the office bookcase holding a set of Blackstone, Kent's Commentaries, Chitty's Pleadings, and a few other

books. A fine law library was in the Capitol building across the street to which the attorneys of the place had access.

"And now as to Mr. Lincoln himself: The blue jeans in which he was clad the first time I saw him in 1840 had been discarded in favor of broadcloth shortly before his marriage. The day I entered his office in 1845 he had on a black suit — coat and trousers of cloth and vest of satin; and the buckram stock about his neck was covered with black silk forcing him to carry his head more erect than would an ordinary tie. In summer he was accustomed to wear shoes known as the Wellington style; but in winter he wore boots. He had great fondness for chess or checkers and also liked tenpins; but cared nothing for fishing or hunting.

"It would not be fair to speak of Mr. Lincoln as an idler save in his aversion to bodily labor. His brain was a singularly active one — seemed never to rest, never to tire; yet as a formal student he struck me as actually lazy. Days of leisure came frequently, and on such occasions he might sometimes be seen sitting in his chair with his feet on the office table reading the office copy of Byron or Burns. He would read for an hour or two, then close the book and stretch himself at full length on the office lounge, his feet projecting over the end, his hand under head, and his eyes closed, and in this attitude would digest the mental food he had just taken. He read but little at the office, and I have never imagined there was much burning of the midnight oil at his home. The truth is he never studied hard at any period of his life. He did not need to study hard. With him a single reading was sufficient to afford a clear insight into any ordinary subject.

"I was well acquainted with Mrs. Lincoln and was fre-

quently at her house, being sent there now and then by her husband on errands from the office. On two occasions, I remember, I was her escort at a ball, instead of her husband, who, because of absence from home, was unable to accompany her. I found her to be a good dancer; she was bright, witty, and accomplished, being able to speak French fluently. The sportive title or nickname she gave me was Mr. 'Mister,' but her husband invariably addressed me by my first name. She rarely visited the office. She was a member of the Presbyterian Church, but the statement that Mr. Lincoln attended divine service nearly every Sunday he was in Springfield may have been true of later years, but to predicate it of the period when I was in office, in the forties, would be more or less of an exaggeration. Mr. Lincoln showed great consideration for his wife. She was unusually timid and nervous especially during a storm. If the clouds gathered and the thunder rolled, he knew its effect on his wife and would at once hasten home to remain there with her till the skies cleared and the storm was safely over."

CHAPTER IX

A Springfield lawyer's opinion of Lincoln's mental equipment — Outline of his physical organization — His appetite — How he ate an apple — His predisposition to melancholy — Description of his figure — His head, arms, and legs — His countenance, his walk, and other physical attributes — His mental processes — His perception, judgment, and conscience — His indifference as to forms or methods — A profound reasoner — Remorseless in analysis — A giant intellect and in full comprehension of his own ability.

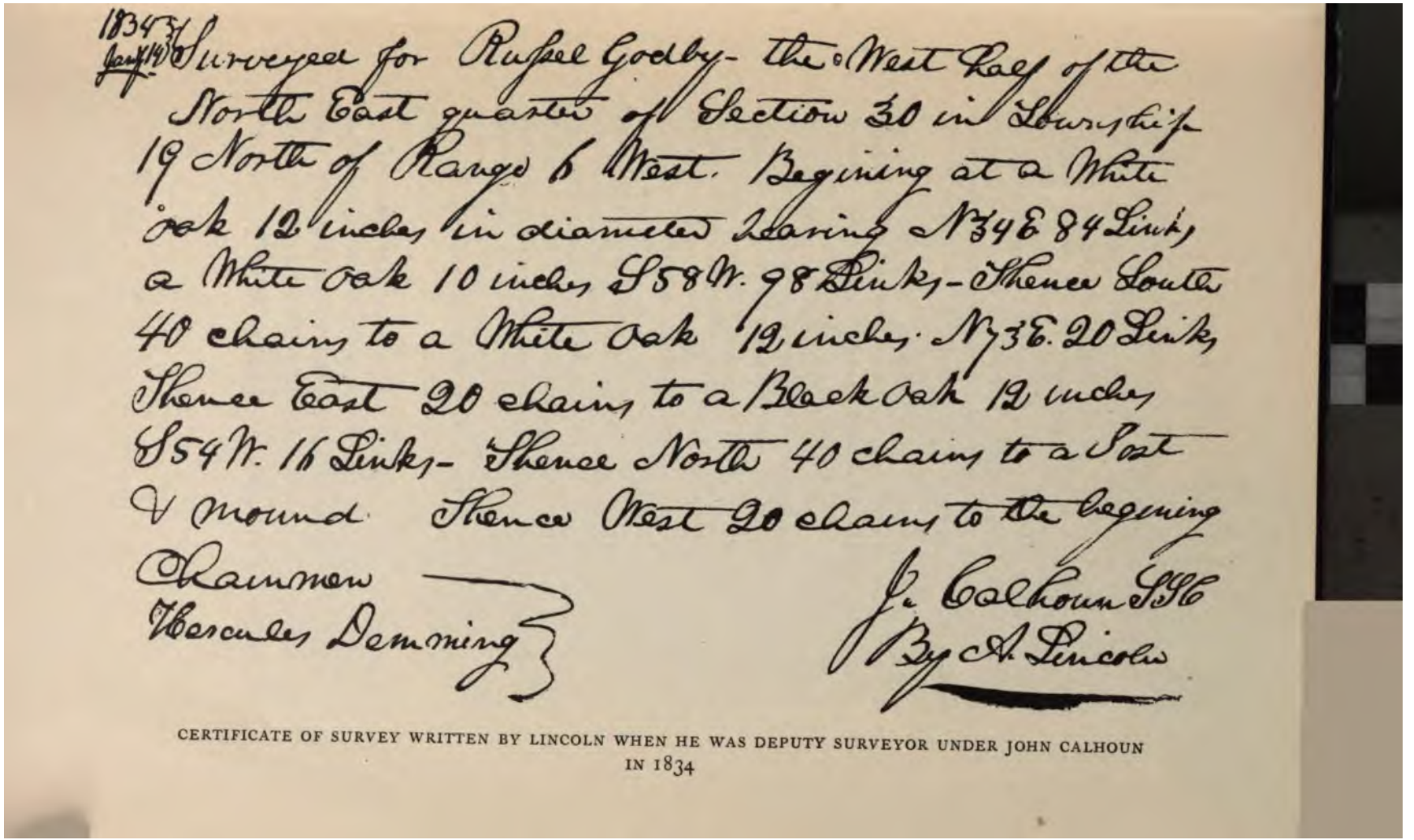
In his physical organization, according to John T. Stuart and Herndon, both of whom were his law partners and therefore observed him at very close range, Lincoln was something of a riddle. Likewise to those who viewed him from another angle he was still difficult of comprehension. Here is an analysis of his mental structure by a fellow lawyer. It was written in 1866 and the original manuscript is still in my possession. Although I have thus far withheld the writer's name, I feel free to state that he was a Springfield man, but not a partner of, nor intimate with, Lincoln. After reciting that he had been asked to put in writing his opinion of the mind of Lincoln he says:

"I consent to do so without any other motive than to comply with the request of a brother lawyer, for if I know myself, no other motive would induce me to do it, because, while Mr. Lincoln and I were always good friends, I believe myself wholly indifferent to the future of his memory. The opinion I now have was formed by a personal and professional acquaintance of over ten years, and has not been altered or influenced by any of his promotions in public life. The adulation by base multitudes of a living and pageantry surrounding a dead President do not shake my

well-settled convictions of the man's mental caliber. Physiologically and phrenologically the man was a sort of monstrosity. His frame was large, long, bony, and muscular; his head small and disproportionately shaped. He had large, square jaws; large, heavy nose; small, lascivious mouth, and soft, tender, bluish eyes. I would say he was a cross between Venus and Hercules. I believe it to be inconsistent with the laws of human organization for any such creature to possess a mind capable of anything called great. The man's mind partook of the incongruities of his body. He had no mind not possessed by the most ordinary of men. It was simply the peculiarity of his mental and the oddity of his physical structure, as well as the qualities of his heart, that singled him out from the mass of men. His native love of justice, truth, and humanity led his mind a great way in the accomplishment of his objects in life. That passion or sentiment steadied and determined an otherwise indecisive mind."

The following extract from a lecture by Herndon soon after Lincoln's death contains an analysis of the latter's physical and mental equipment so unerring and yet so profound there is abundant reason why it should be preserved. Its value to history arises from the fact that it was prepared for delivery to audiences in central Illinois composed largely of Lincoln's neighbors, people the most competent of all to test its accuracy and truthfulness. Among other things he said:

> Mr. Lincoln was wiry, sinewy, and raw-boned — thin through the breast to the back and narrow across the shoulders. Standing, he leaned forward; was somewhat stoop-shouldered, inclining to the consumptive in build. His usual weight was



1834 Surveyed for Rufus Godby - the West half of the
Jan 14 North East quarter of Section 30 in Township
19 North of Range 6 West. Beginning at a White
oak 12 inches in diameter Bearing N 34 E 84 Links
a White Oak 10 inches S 58 W. 98 Links - Thence South
40 chains to a White Oak 12 inches. N 3 E. 20 Links
Thence East 20 chains to a Black Oak 12 inches
S 54 W. 16 Links - Thence North 40 chains to a Post
& mound Thence West 20 chains to the beginning

Examined
Thos Demming

J. Calhoun S.S.G.
By A. Lincoln

CERTIFICATE OF SURVEY WRITTEN BY LINCOLN WHEN HE WAS DEPUTY SURVEYOR UNDER JOHN CALHOUN IN 1834

about a hundred and eighty pounds. His organization worked slowly. His blood had to run a long distance from his heart to the extremities of his frame, and his nerve force had to travel through dry ground a wide circuit before his muscles were obedient to his will. His structure was loose and leathery, his body shrunk and shriveled, he had dark skin, dark hair, and looked woe-struck. The whole man, body and mind, worked against more or less friction and creaked as if it needed oiling.

His circulation was low and sluggish, so that there was after all only limited wear and tear of his bodily tissues. Hence he had no very strong appetite for stimulating drinks or tonics. "I am entitled to little credit for not drinking," he once said to me when I asked him about whiskey, "because I hate the stuff. It is unpleasant and always leaves me flabby and undone." He had a good but moderate appetite for food and was satisfied with almost anything that would allay hunger. He ate slowly and mechanically, never complaining of the food if it was bad nor praising it if good. On the circuit and elsewhere I sat down with him times without number, but I never knew him to manifest any objection to the food that graced the table, although some of our colleagues would often swear at it. He adored the vegetable world, but in his own selection of things to eat he was decidedly mixed. He loved a good cup of coffee, but he was especially fond of an apple. His manipulation of an apple when he ate it was unique. He disdained the use of a knife to cut or pare it. Instead he would grasp it around the equatorial part, holding it thus until his thumb and forefinger almost met, sink his teeth into it, and then, unlike the average person, begin eating at the blossom end. When he was done he had eaten his way over and through rather than around and into it. Such, at least, was his explanation. I never saw an apple thus disposed of by any one else.

The most marked and prominent feature in Lincoln's organization was his predisposition to melancholy or at least the appearance thereof as indicated by his facial expression when sitting alone and thus shut off from conversation with other people. It was a characteristic as

peculiar as it was pronounced. Almost every man in Illinois I met, including not only Herndon, but John T. Stuart, Samuel H. Treat, James C. Conkling, James H. Matheney, David Davis, Leonard Swett, and Henry C. Whitney, reminded me of it. No one was able to determine what caused it. Stuart and Swett attributed it to defective digestion — in fact, Stuart told me and Herndon that Lincoln's liver failed to function properly. "It did not secrete bile," he said, "and his bowels were equally inactive. It was this that made him look so sad and depressed. That was my notion, and I remember I talked to him about it and advised him to resort to blue-mass pills which he did. This was before he went to Washington. When I came on to Congress in 1863, he told me that for a few months after his inauguration as President he continued the pill remedy, but he was finally forced to cease because it was losing its efficacy besides making him more or less irritable."

My inquiry on this subject among Lincoln's close friends convinced me that men who never saw him could scarcely realize this tendency to melancholy, not only as reflected in his facial expression, but as it affected his spirits and well-being. Robert L. Wilson, who was a member with Lincoln of the Illinois Legislature in 1836, wrote thus to Herndon February 10, 1866:

"Mr. Lincoln told me that although he appeared to enjoy life rapturously, still he was the victim of terrible melancholy. He sought company and indulged in fun and hilarity without restraint or stint as to time; but when by himself he told me that he was so overcome by mental depression he never dared carry a knife in his pocket; and as long as I was intimately acquainted with him previous to

his commencement of the practice of the law he never carried a pocket-knife."

The above is copied from the original manuscript signed by Wilson, delivered to Herndon, and by him turned over to me. Along with it came this reference to Lincoln's peculiarity in Herndon's hand:

"As to the cause of this morbid condition, my idea has always been that it was occult and could not be explained by any course of observation and reasoning. It was ingrained, and being ingrained could not be reduced to rule or the cause assigned. It was necessarily hereditary, but whether it came down from a long line of ancestors and far back or was simply the saddened face of Nancy Hanks cannot well be determined. At any rate, it was part of his nature and could no more be shaken off than he could part with his brains. Simple in carriage or bearing, free from pomp or display, serious, unaffected, Lincoln was a sad-looking man whose melancholy dripped from him as he walked."

How Lincoln impressed Herndon may be judged from the following fragments of his lecture:

In person and physique it can hardly be said that Mr. Lincoln was either dapper or handsome. Somewhat ill-proportioned in figure, his movements seemed labored if not at times more or less awkward. He had a sad and rugged face which defied artistic skill to soften or idealize. It was capable of few expressions, but they were abundantly suggestive and unusual. When in repose his face was grave and thoughtful, pervaded by a look of dejection as painful as it was prominent; it brightened like a lighted lantern when animated. His dull eyes would sparkle with fun or express as kindly and tender a look as ever mounted a face when moved by some matter of human interest or sympathy. There was more difference between Lincoln grave and Lincoln

animated in facial expression than almost any other man of his day.

His forehead was narrow but high; his hair dark, coarse and rebellious. His cheek-bones were high, sharp, and prominent; his jaws were long; nose large and a little awry toward the right eye; chin sharp and upcurved. His eyebrows cropped out like a huge rock on the brow of a hill; his face was sallow, shrunk, and wrinkled, with here and there a hair on the surface and his cheeks leathery. His ears were large and ran out almost at right angles from his head, caused partly by heavy hats and partly by nature; his lower lip thick and undercurved while his chin reached for the lip upcurved; his neck slender and trim neatly balancing his head; there was the lone mole on the right cheek and Adam's apple on his throat.

His head was long and tall from the base of his brain and from the eyebrows. His head ran backwards, his forehead rising at a low angle like Clay's, and unlike Webster's, which was almost perpendicular. The size of his hat measured at the hatter's block was seven and one eighth, his head being from ear to ear six and one half inches and from the front to the back of the brain eight inches. Thus measured it was not below the medium size. The look of gloom or sadness, so often noted in the many descriptions of his countenance, was more or less accentuated by a peculiarity of one eye, the pupil of which had a tendency to turn or roll slightly toward the upper lid, whereas the other one maintained its normal position equidistant between the upper and lower lids.

His legs and arms were very long and in undue proportion to the rest of his body. Sitting in a chair he was not taller than ordinary men; it was only when he stood up that he loomed above them. He walked like an Indian, with even tread, the inner sides of his feet being parallel, betokening caution. He put the whole foot flat down on the ground, not landing on the heel; he likewise lifted it all at once, not rising from the toe; hence there was no spring to his step as he moved up and down the street.

Thus stood, walked, and looked this unusual man. True he was plain, unprepossessing, yea even commonplace, but when that gray eye and every feature of that earnest and deeply thoughtful face were lighted up by an inward soul reflecting the

fires of righteous zeal and determination, then it was that these apparently homely features beamed rather than repelled or sank beneath the sea of inspiration that sometimes flooded his face. In fact, there were times when it seemed to me as if Lincoln's soul was fresh from the hands of Him who gave it being.

Mr. Lincoln's perceptions were slow, cold, and exact. Everything came to him in its precise shape and color. No lurking illusion or other error, false in itself and clad for the moment in robes of splendor, ever passed undetected or unchallenged over the threshold of his mind — that point which divides vision from the realm and home of thought. He saw all things through a perfect moral lens. There was no diffraction or refraction there; nor was he impulsive, fanciful, or imaginative. He threw his whole mental light around the object and in time substance and quality stood apart, form and color took their respective places, and all was clear and exact in his mind. He was pitiless and unrelenting in his search for the truth. His skill in the association of ideas was as marvelous as his memory was tenacious and unerring. His language indicated oddity of vision as well as expression. In his search for words he was sometimes hard pressed to give proper expression to his thoughts; first, because he was in no sense a master of the English language, and secondly, because in the vast store of words there were so few at his limited command that represented the exact shade of meaning he intended to convey. This will account for the frequent use by him of stories and maxims with which to impress the truth of his convictions upon the minds of his listeners.

Mr. Lincoln in mental action was causative; his mind apparently with an automatic movement ran behind facts, principles, and all things to their origin — their first cause. He was remorseless in his analysis of everything he sought to determine. He would stop in the street and study a machine. He would whittle things to a point and then count the numberless inclined planes and their pitch making the point. Mastering and defining this, he would cut that point back and get a broad transverse section of his pine stick and peel and define that. Clocks, omnibuses, and language, paddle-wheels and idioms never escaped his observation and analysis. Before he could form an idea of anything, before he expressed his opinion, he must know it in origin

and history, in substance and quality, in magnitude and gravity. He must know his subject inside and outside, upside and downside.

All facts and principles had to run through the crucible of an inflexible judgment and be tested by the fierce fires of an analytical mind; and hence when he spoke his utterances rang out with the clear ring of genuine gold upon the counters of the understanding. His reasoning through logic, comparison, and analogy was unerring and deadly; his adversaries dreaded his originality of idea, condensation and force of expression, not less than they writhed under the convincing effect of singularly significant and apt stories. Woe be to the man who hugged to his bosom a secret error if Abraham Lincoln ever suspected or started in chase of it! Time and all the legerdemain of debate could hide it in no nook or angle of space in which he would not detect and expose it.

Though accurate in perception, a profound thinker as well as analyzer, his judgment on some occasions and in certain questions was pitiably weak. It might be said that his mind was in some respects slow and ponderous, not quick or discriminating; but when it came to the concentration of his great powers of reasoning, from cause to effect, the supremacy of truth, his deductions could not be overcome. When his mind could not grasp premises from which to argue, he was weaker than a child, because he had none of the child's intuitions — the soul's quick vision of the assembled facts. To that extent Mr. Lincoln was lacking in his mental structure. He was on the alert if a principle was involved or a man's rights at stake in a transaction; but he could see no harm or impropriety in wearing a sack-coat instead of a swallow-tail at an evening party, nor could he realize the offense of telling a coarse or questionable story if a preacher happened to be present.

He did not care for forms, ways, methods — the non-substantial things of this world. He could not, by reason of his structure and mental make-up, be much concerned about them; nor did he manifest an intense interest in any individual man — the dollar, property, rank, order, manners, or similar things; neither did he have any avarice or other like vice in his nature. He detested somewhat all technical rules in law and the sciences, con-

tending they were, as a general thing, mere forms founded on arbitrary ideas and not on reason, truth, and the right. What satisfied a small or narrow and critical mind did not always suit Mr. Lincoln any more than a child's clothes would his body. As a rule he took but slight interest in purely local affairs; was hardly ever present at a town meeting, and the few gatherings which he did attend almost invariably were political conventions. He seemed not to care who succeeded to the presidency of this or that society or railroad company; who made the most money; who was going to Philadelphia and what were the costs of such a trip; who among his friends got this office or that — who was elected street commissioner or health inspector. No principle of justice, truth, or right being involved in these things, he could not be moved by them. It only remains to say that he was inflexibly steadfast in human transactions when it was necessary to be so and not otherwise. One moment he was as pliable and expansive as gentle air; the next as firm and unerring as gravity itself.

Mr. Lincoln's understanding, his conscience, yea, everything, yielded submissively to the despotism of his reason. His analytical power was profound. In his mental organization logic occupied the throne. His vision was clear; his pursuit of the truth intense and unremitting. His conscience ruled his heart; he was always just before he was generous. But above and beyond everything else it was plain to his friends that his strength lay in his ability to reason. From that height he came down with crushing and irresistible force. The tallest intellects in the world bowed to him, and it is, therefore, no stretch of the truth to declare that, when viewed from the elevated standpoint of reason and logic, he was easily one of the greatest intellects the nation has produced. Another strong point in his construction was his knowledge of himself; he understood and comprehended his own capacity — what he did and why he did it — better, perhaps, than any other man of his day. He had a wider and deeper conception of his environments and limitations than men who made greater pretensions or had enjoyed the benefits of more thorough training.

Viewing his life as a whole the student of history will be sure to conclude that the elements which predominated in Mr. Lin-

coln's peculiar character were: first, his great capacity and power of reason; second, his conscience and excellent understanding; third, an exalted idea of the sense of right and equity; fourth, his intense veneration of the true and the good. Whatever of life, vigor, and power of eloquence his peculiar qualities gave him; whatever there was in a fair, manly, and impartial administration of justice under law to all men; whatever there was in a strong will in the right, governed by tenderness and mercy; whatever there was in toil and sublime patience; whatever there was in these things or a wise combination of them Lincoln is justly entitled to in making up the impartial verdict of history. These limit and define him as a lawyer, an orator, a statesman, and a man. They developed in all the walks of his life; they were his law; they were his nature — they were Abraham Lincoln.

CHAPTER X

Behind the door of Lincoln's home — What the neighbors saw and heard — The testimony of James Gourley — Lincoln's garden and dooryard — The ups and downs of life at the Eighth Street home — How Lincoln and his wife agreed — What Josiah P. Kent saw and remembered — Mrs. Lincoln and the iceman — The family carriage — Buying a ticket to the circus — Juvenile pranks at Lincoln's expense — Mrs. Lincoln's peculiarities of temperament.

In order to bring out in sharper outline the human side of Lincoln, to learn more definitely how he lived and bore himself with the door of his home closed against the intrusion of an anxious but heartless world, Mr. Herndon was good enough to put me on the track of much rare and authentic information which, otherwise, might not have reached the public. Among other things I remember he gave me the names and whereabouts of certain neighbors of Lincoln, urging me to "run them down and pump them dry," as he expressed it, a suggestion which I promptly undertook to carry out. Judged by their opportunities and the angle from which these people viewed Lincoln, I could not but agree with Herndon that their testimony was of unquestioned value and importance. One of Lincoln's closest neighbors was James Gourley, a shoemaker, who lived in a house adjoining the Lincoln homestead on the east. The Lincolns and Gourleys were on the best of terms, which is evidenced by the fact that one of the first persons in Springfield selected by Lincoln for a position in Washington after he became President was a son of Gourley.

"I lived next door to the Lincolns for nineteen years," said Gourley, "and knew the family well. The truth is I

knew him as early as 1834. At that time he was living in New Salem, where he was postmaster. He used to come from there afoot to Springfield and wind up at Stuart and Dummer's office, where he borrowed books and took them back with him. Even then he was a great story-teller, and when he was at Stuart's office as I have told you he always had a crowd about him. In those days I used to run foot-races, and I recall that E. D. Baker challenged me and I ran a race with him. Baker was a close friend of Lincoln, but notwithstanding the friendship between them Lincoln backed me and I beat Baker. In the course of time Lincoln moved here to Springfield and finally became my neighbor. He used to come to our house, his feet in a pair of loose slippers, and wearing an old, faded pair of trousers fastened with one suspender. Sometimes he came for milk. Our rooms were low, and one day he said: 'Jim, you'll have to lift your loft a little higher: I can't straighten out under it very well.' To my wife, who was short in stature, he used to say that little people had some advantages: they required less 'wood and wool to make them comfortable.'

"As I remember Mr. Lincoln he was a poor landscape gardener and his yard was graced by very little shrubbery. He once decided to plant some rosebushes in the yard, and called my attention to them, but in a short time he had forgotten all about them. He never planted any vines or trees of any kind; in fact seemed to take little, if any, interest in things of that kind. Finally, however, yielding to my oft-repeated suggestion, he undertook to cultivate a garden in the yard back of his house; but one season's experience in caring for his flowers and vegetables sufficed to cure

him of all desire for another. In other respects he was more or less domestic in his tastes. He kept his own horse; feeding and caring for the animal when at home. He fed and milked his own cow and even sawed his own wood.

"Like all families the Lincoln's had their ups and downs, too, but viewing, as a whole, the almost twenty years I lived beside them, I think it is safe to say they agreed moderately well. As a rule Mr. Lincoln yielded to his wife — in fact, almost any other man, had he known the woman as I did, would have done the same thing. She was gifted with an unusually high temper and that invariably got the better of her. She was also very excitable and when wrought up frequently had hallucinations. I remember once when her husband was away from home she conceived the notion that some rough characters had designs on her and her hired girl. She had worked herself up to a furious pitch, weeping and wailing loud enough to be heard by the neighbors, and even asked me to spend the night at her house guarding the premises and thus protect her and her girl. Of course I expressed a willingness to do whatever she asked, although I knew the whole thing was imaginary as well as absurd. This was not the only time her demonstrations were loud enough to be heard by some of the neighbors. If she became excited or troublesome, as she sometimes did when Mr. Lincoln was at home, it was interesting to know what he would do. At first he would apparently pay no attention to her. Frequently he would laugh at her, which is a risky thing to do in the face of an infuriated wife; but generally, if her impatience continued, he would pick up one of the children and deliberately leave home as if to take a walk. After he had gone, the storm usually sub-

sided, but sometimes it would break out again when he returned.

"Notwithstanding her unfortunate temper and her peculiarities generally, I never thought Mrs. Lincoln was as bad as some people here in Springfield have represented her. The truth is she had more than one redeeming trait. She and I rarely ever differed — in fact, we were good friends. Although I do not believe she could plead justification for many of the uncalled-for things she did, yet, when I hear her criticized by some people, I cannot but recall what she once said to me about her husband, which was, that if he had been at home as much as he ought, she could have been happier and loved him more."

Another man to whom I had been referred by Herndon and other old residents of Springfield was Josiah P. Kent. Although not so well advanced in years as Gourley, he lived as near and knew the Lincolns quite as well, especially during the closing years of the family's stay in Springfield. At first he seemed a little reluctant to express himself, and it was only after a second visit coupled with the urgent suggestion of an old friend that he was induced to unbosom himself. His home, he told me, was in the same block with the Lincoln residence, and he was at the latter so often and so much of the time he became virtually a member of the household.

"It was largely at the instance of my mother," he said, "that I went there. She arranged with Mrs. Lincoln that I should help the family by doing the various things a young man of my age should do to befriend a neighbor. It was late in the fifties when Robert was away attending college in the East. Mr. Lincoln was also away from home

a good deal, so that my willingness and service to the family were deeply appreciated. I spent many a night at the house, sleeping usually in the same room which Robert had occupied. I took care of the horse and in general made myself useful about the premises. In the course of time Mrs. Lincoln induced her husband to purchase a carriage after which I was duly installed as coachman. In order to keep up with the fashion of that day, she hired me to drive her about town on certain days, usually for a few hours, in the afternoon, going from house to house where she made her calls. For this service I was to receive twenty-five cents each time I made the drive. One day I remember she offered an additional quarter of a dollar if I would go down to see Myers, the iceman — there was only one dealer in ice in those days — and learn why he had ceased bringing her ice. I saw the man and he told me he had ceased supplying the lady with his commodity because she lost her temper a day or two before, accused him of cheating in weight, and abused him so loudly he had resolved never to call at her house again. After an ingenious explanation and prolonged entreaty on my part, however, he finally relented, and the next day appeared at the Lincoln house with the required allotment of ice.

"Meanwhile a circus was advertised for Springfield and I wanted to go. I had taken Mrs. Lincoln on one drive which, with the amount due me for visiting and influencing the iceman, made a total of fifty cents — the price of a ticket to the show. The good lady had not yet paid me, and I did n't have the courage to ask her for it. But the circus was due the next day. Meanwhile a friend told me that Mr. Lincoln had just reached town and advised me to state the

case to him and ask for the money. Being more or less desperate, I finally resolved to do it. Arrived at a certain street corner I lay in wait for Mr. Lincoln, who was sure to pass by on his way home. In due time he appeared. I accosted him and having summoned all my courage blushingly told my story. He eyed me closely and seemed deeply interested especially when I mentioned the approaching circus. 'Fifty cents,' he said, 'is rather small pay for the service you seem to have rendered Mrs. Lincoln and you should have been paid long ago.' He smiled and drew from his pocket the money; but it was not the expected fifty — it was seventy-five cents. 'What's the extra twenty-five cents for?' I asked. 'That's interest on your investment,' he laughed, and then resumed his walk toward home.

"Mr. Lincoln was well liked by the boys of our neighborhood notwithstanding the many pranks we played on him in some of which his own boys occasionally joined. He seemed to understand as well as enjoy boy nature perfectly. We were in the habit, after dark, of hiding behind a certain fence along which people walked on their way home from downtown. We had a lath which we would poke between two pickets just high enough above the ground to knock off the headgear of the passer-by. Concealed from sight behind the fence we carried on our sport without detection. One evening as usual we heard footsteps coming down the sidewalk, and although it was too dark — there were no street lights then — to determine who it was, we jumped behind the fence and prepared for action. The lath did its work and off came a tall stiff hat. The victim was no less a person than Mr. Lincoln. We suppressed our giggles the best we could and prepared for the

punishment, or at least the rebuke, which we felt sure would follow; but to our surprise Mr. Lincoln simply picked up his hat, and although he could not see us, he laughed, exclaimed, 'Boys, you ought to be ashamed to impose on an old man,' and resumed his saunter down the street as if nothing unusual had happened.

"After the Lincolns had had their carriage for some time, or until the novelty of owning one had passed away, I conceived the idea of trying to borrow it for an afternoon's use myself. Accordingly I applied to Mr. Lincoln for it, but refrained from telling him where I wanted to drive or who, if any one else, I expected to take with me. The truth is I intended to fill the conveyance with boys — including in the number one of Mr. Lincoln's — and drive the outfit to a well-known swimming hole some distance from town. When I asked Mr. Lincoln he declined, saying that there were two things he would not lend: his wife and his carriage; but he added that I might have the use of his horse and harness. After he was gone, and without his knowledge, but with the aid of another, we slipped the carriage out, filled it with boys, and started away; but just after we had passed the edge of town the horse became frightened and ran away, throwing most of us out and damaging the vehicle. A near-by blacksmith was secured who repaired the break, and after much effort we succeeded in getting the carriage back home. Among other things I remember we carefully painted the place which the blacksmith had marred in making his repairs, and then threw dust over it to give it the appearance of age and thus remove the sign of fresh paint; in fact, we made every effort possible to keep all knowledge of the accident from Mr.

Lincoln. We probably succeeded, for if he learned the story he never mentioned it to us."

Beyond what is here recorded Mr. Kent had but little more to communicate regarding Mrs. Lincoln herself. The incidents of her home life as he detailed them were far from voluminous; nor did he comment very freely on her attitude and bearing toward her husband. On that phase of the subject he was more or less non-committal. He insisted that Maria Drake, the girl who, for a long time, was an inmate of the Lincoln home, could shed more light than any one else, but she having married William Clark and moved to the Far West many years before, was no longer accessible. Brief and definite though Kent's recollection of Mrs. Lincoln was, I found that he agreed substantially with the other neighbors. "She was not only nervous and high-tempered," he said to me, alluding to Mrs. Lincoln, "but very demonstrative, quick of action, and at times loud. It was never difficult to locate her. It mattered not who was present when she fell into a rage, for nothing would restrain her. The iceman could testify to that. Her voice was shrill and at times so penetrating, especially when summoning the children or railing at some one whose actions had awakened her temper, she could easily be heard over the neighborhood. When thus aroused and giving vent to her feelings, it is little wonder that Mr. Lincoln would suddenly think of an engagement he had downtown, grasp his hat, and start for his office by the shortest and most direct route he knew."

CHAPTER XI

Lincoln as a lawyer — Estimates of David Davis and others — First leaning toward the law manifested in Indiana — Borrowing books of Judge Pitcher, of Rockport — Attending squire's court at Gentryville — Studying law books after reaching New Salem — Admission to the bar at Springfield — His opinion of examinations — Story of an applicant he himself examined — The note to Judge Logan — Hawthorne *vs.* Woolridge, his first case: its history and termination — Scammon *vs.* Cline, his first case in the Supreme Court — His last appearance in court — His three partnerships — His wonderful ability as a reasoner — The scope and extent of his practice — Range and size of his fees — His skill and care in the preparation of papers — The trial of Bailey *vs.* Cromwell proving that a negro girl was not a slave — Also Carman *vs.* Glasscock involving the navigability of the Sangamon River.

NOTWITHSTANDING the copious and unprecedented array of matter that has been apportioned to an eager world regarding the life of Lincoln, it cannot be said that his biographers have provided as broad and exhaustive an account of his varied achievements as we are entitled to have. This is especially true of our conception of him as a lawyer; for it was in the law office and the court-room that many of his peculiarities and traits of character were brought to the light. When delving into this phase of his activities I found that, among his colleagues at the bar and others equally competent to judge, no two agreed in their estimate of his genius and ability. Two men who have written books describing him as a lawyer put him at the very head of the list, whereas David Davis and William H. Herndon, who knew him longer and more intimately, probably, than all the other lawyers at the Springfield bar, each qualified what they said about him. "He could hardly be called very learned in the profession," said Davis, "and yet he rarely tried a cause without fully understanding the

law applicable to it. At the same time it can be said that he read law books but little save when the cause in hand made it necessary." In October, 1885, Herndon put this in writing: "Although only moderately well read in the elementary books he studied so thoroughly certain special and adjudicated cases until he developed into a good practitioner. To that extent, therefore, it is fair to call him a case lawyer. Apparently he cared but little for forms, rules of pleading, or practice. He went in for substance mainly; but in the end became a good *nisi prius* lawyer and a better Supreme Court lawyer." Here is the tribute of Samuel C. Parks, one of his colleagues: "Lincoln's conscience, reason, and judgment worked out the law for him. It would not do to call him a great lawyer, for he was not; but it is fair to state that he was a good lawyer under conditions. He was not as quick as some men — in fact, required more time to study his case and thus arrive at the truth. But above all things he must feel that he was right. For a man who was for a quarter of a century both a lawyer and a politician, he was the most honest man I ever knew. He was not only morally honest, but intellectually so. At the bar he was strong if convinced that he was in the right, but if he suspected that he might be wrong he was the weakest lawyer I ever saw."

Though Lincoln was not a profound lawyer in the sense that the jurist John Marshall was, or, possibly, as able and successful a *nisi prius* practitioner as was Stephen T. Logan, yet, from an intellectual standpoint, he was greater than either. For clear reasoning power, merciless analogy, and lucidity of statement he had no superior at the Illinois bar, and yet the truth is there never was, either

in Illinois or elsewhere, just such a lawyer. He said once he had never read a law book through in all his life, and yet it is the testimony of his colleagues that he was a most adroit and oftentimes dangerous antagonist. In the language of David Davis: "That man who laughed at a contest with the clear head, the brave heart, and the strong right arm of Abraham Lincoln always had to have his laugh first; for after the contest had ended and the man woke up with his back in a ditch, laughing was too serious a matter." Whatever he may have lacked of the delicate polish which comes of collegiate training was counterbalanced by his wonderfully well-developed reasoning powers. "All facts and principles," said Herndon, "had to run through the crucible of an inflexible judgment and be tested by the fierce fires of an analytical mind, and hence, when he spoke, his utterances resounded with the clear ring of genuine gold on the counters of the understanding. His reasoning through logic, analogy, and comparison was unerring and deadly. His adversaries dreaded his originality of idea, condensation and force of expression, not less than they writhed under the convincing effect of his singularly significant and apt stories. Woe be to the man who hugged to his bosom a secret error if Abraham Lincoln ever set out to uncover it. All the ingenuity of delusive reasoning, all the legerdemain of debate, could hide it in no nook or angle of space in which he would not detect and expose it."

Who or what really prompted Lincoln to adopt the law as his calling through life has never been determined. Along with numberless others I confess I have often wondered what would have happened, or what, if any, differ-

ence it would have made in the world's history if, instead of making a lawyer of himself, he had taken to medicine, the pulpit, or some other one of the learned professions. It is known that very early in life, while living in Indiana, he evinced a pronounced fondness for the argumentative disputations which so often took place at the store and the blacksmith shop in Gentryville; and when the stage was set for a lawsuit before the village squire, "Abe Lincoln was sure to be on hand an eager and attentive listener." Many years ago, when I was at Mount Vernon, Indiana, I learned from Judge John Pitcher, that between the years 1820 and 1830, when he was living and practicing law in the town of Rockport, the county seat of Spencer County, Indiana, Abraham Lincoln on several occasions came down from his home in the village of Gentryville, distant about fifteen miles, and talked to Judge Pitcher about books, asking how to read them and how in other ways to obtain or at least improve his education. "I counseled with him," said Pitcher, "and loaned him several books, some of them being law books, which he took home with him to read. I understood he wanted to become a lawyer and I tried to encourage him." The specific names or titles of the volumes which Judge Pitcher loaned young Lincoln the former did not indicate, but we have the best of authority for believing that the first law book to which he had access was the Revised Statutes of Indiana, a small volume loaned to him by his boyhood friend, David Turnham. This statement is confirmed by Lincoln's stepmother, who was visited by Herndon at her home near Charleston, Illinois, in the summer of 1865, and later by a son of Turnham whom I met several times during my sojourn in south-



JUDGE JOHN PITCHER

ern Indiana. It is said — but it is only a tradition and not verified — that while still a young man in Indiana, Lincoln would occasionally journey to Boonville, the county seat of Warrick County, also about fifteen miles from Gentryville, to attend sessions of the court, and that on one occasion he was so profoundly impressed by the argument of John A. Brackenridge, who appeared for the defense in a murder trial, that he sought the latter after court adjourned and congratulated him on the brilliance and effectiveness of his speech.

In that characteristic bit of autobiography which Lincoln wrote and turned over to Jesse W. Fell, of Bloomington, Illinois, in 1859, he relates that from 1832 to 1838, which he terms his legislative period, he studied law, which would indicate that, although he may have leaned toward the law while still living in Indiana, from which State he emigrated in 1830, he did not decide upon it as a profession, at least did not enter on a systematic study of its principles, till after he had reached and located in the village of New Salem, in Illinois. It is probable that during his service in the Black Hawk War, where he became acquainted with Major John T. Stuart, who was then a practicing lawyer in Springfield, he apprised the latter of his ambition; at any rate, after the war was over and both had returned to their respective homes, Lincoln would frequently trudge down to Springfield from New Salem to borrow or return Stuart's law books.

Lincoln's induction into the legal arena was unattended by any display, ceremony, or noteworthy circumstance. The first step in the formal process of which there is any evidence is the following entry found in the records of

the Circuit Court of Sangamon County, Illinois, dated March 24, 1836: "It is ordered by the Court that it be certified that Abraham Lincoln is a person of good moral character." The next item appears in the records of the Supreme Court of Illinois, where it is shown under date of September 9, 1836, that he was licensed to practice in all the courts of the State by two justices of the Supreme Court. On March 1st of the following year the clerk entered his name on the roll of attorneys and he thus became a full-fledged lawyer. After March 1, 1841, the Supreme Court adopted a rule requiring all applicants for admission to the bar to present themselves in person for examination in open court. Whether Lincoln underwent any examination either private or in open court is not known. The truth is he never put much faith in the propriety or efficacy of the conventional examination. He believed there were other if not better ways of determining a man's fitness for a given task or position than the regulation test questions. "I personally wish," he said in a letter addressed to the Secretary of War, November 11, 1863—just eight days before he delivered the Gettysburg Address—"Jacob Freese, of New Jersey, to be appointed colonel for a colored regiment, and this regardless, whether he can tell the exact shade of Julius Cæsar's hair."

Before the close of the fifties Lincoln was a member of a committee appointed by the Supreme Court of Illinois to examine applicants for admission to the bar. At the town of Bloomington he was approached one day by Jonathan Birch, a young man who for some time had been a student in the office of a practicing attorney there, and desired to undergo the required examination. It happens

that I knew the applicant well, for he later removed to Indiana where I was born; was my neighbor, my legal adviser, and for upwards of forty years one of my most trusted and intimate friends. He told me that when the matter of his examination was presented to Lincoln, he was directed by the latter to meet him at the hotel in the evening after court had adjourned for the day. "At the appointed time," said Mr. Birch when he related the incident, "I knocked at the door of his room and was admitted. Motioning me to be seated he began his interrogatories at once without looking at me a second time to be sure of the identity of his caller. 'How long have you been studying?' he asked. 'Almost two years,' was my response. 'By this time it seems to me,' he said laughingly, 'you ought to be able to determine whether you have in you the stuff out of which a good lawyer can be made.' Then he asked me in a desultory way the definition of a contract and two or three other fundamental questions, all of which I answered readily and, as I thought, correctly. Beyond these meager inquiries, as I now recall the incident, he asked nothing more. Meanwhile, sitting on the edge of the bed he began to entertain me with recollections — many of them characteristically vivid and racy — of his own practice and the various incidents and adventures that attended his start in the profession. The whole proceeding was interesting and yet so unusual, if not grotesque, I was at a loss to determine whether I was really being examined or not. In due time we went downstairs and over to the clerk's office in the court-house, where he wrote a few lines on a sheet of paper which he enclosed in an envelope and directed me to report with it to Judge Stephen T. Logan,

the other member of the examining committee at Springfield. The next day I went to Springfield where I delivered the note as directed. On reading it Judge Logan smiled and, much to my surprise, gave me the required certificate or license without asking a question beyond my age, residence and the correct way of spelling my name. The note from Lincoln read":

MY DEAR JUDGE —

The bearer of this is a young man who thinks he can be a lawyer. Examine him if you want to. I have done so and am satisfied. He 's a good deal smarter than he looks to be.

Yours

LINCOLN

On March 1, 1837, when he had gone through the various steps and become a fully accredited practitioner by the action of the clerk of the Supreme Court in entering his name on the roll of attorneys in the State, Lincoln was still a resident of the village of New Salem. A month and half later he had removed to Springfield. Years ago Herndon gave me the papers, in Lincoln's handwriting, containing the history of the first suit or court proceeding in which Lincoln figured or with which he seems to have had any connection. As it was his first venture in that line and naturally throws more or less light on his evolution as a lawyer, it is noteworthy enough to warrant a brief account of its origin and termination. It was an action or, more strictly speaking, three actions growing out of one episode or transaction, and was brought by James P. Hawthorn through his attorneys, Walker & Hewitt, in the circuit court of Sangamon County, Illinois. Of the three causes one was what is known among lawyers as an action on assumpsit, or breach of contract, another for trespass *vi et armis*, and



PAGE OF THE RECORDS OF THE CIRCUIT COURT OF SANGAMON COUNTY, ILLINOIS, FOR MARCH 24, 1836, SHOWING THE COURT ORDER CERTIFYING TO LINCOLN'S GOOD MORAL CHARACTER ON HIS ADMISSION TO THE BAR

the third in replevin. With the exception of the replevin suit, which was not brought till in the fall, the declaration or complaint in each case — which was the initial proceeding in a lawsuit of that day — was filed July 1, 1836. This was before Lincoln had appeared before the two justices of the Supreme Court to secure his license to practice. John T. Stuart, looking forward to an election to Congress and who was soon to invite Lincoln to enter a partnership with him, had been retained by the defense; but, although the pleadings in one or two instances bear Stuart's signature, they are almost without exception in Lincoln's characteristic and legible handwriting. Stuart soon became absorbed in his race for Congress; at any rate, it was but a brief time until Lincoln assumed active charge of the defendant's interests. Stephen T. Logan, destined also several years later to become a partner of Lincoln, was the judge, and William Butler, at whose home Lincoln was a boarder and so continued till his marriage to Mary Todd, was the clerk.

The suit in assumpsit was based on Wooldridge's failure to furnish Hawthorn, the plaintiff, "two yoke of oxen to break up twenty acres of prairie sod-ground"; also because of his refusal to allow Hawthorn to have access to a tract of ground on which the latter had contracted with him to raise a crop of "corn or wheat at the option of the plaintiff"; for all of which he demanded a hundred dollars. The trespass case was of greater weight and importance. The declaration sets out in detail what happened when Hawthorn, despite the threats and protests of Wooldridge, undertook to reach the disputed cornfield. The situation became more or less dramatic. It was charged of Wool-

dridge, Lincoln's client, that: "He struck, beat, bruised and knocked him (Hawthorn) down; plucked, pulled and tore out large quantities of hair from his head; that with a stick and his fists he struck plaintiff a great many violent blows and strokes on and about his face, head, breast, back, shoulders, hips, legs, and divers other parts of his body; that he struck, shook, pulled, pushed and knocked plaintiff to the ground; violently hit, kicked, struck and beat him a great many other blows and strokes; and also then and there, with great violence, forced, pushed, thrust and gouged his fingers into plaintiff's eyes; by means of which assault and consequent illness, injuries, loss of time and expense for medical attention said plaintiff demands damages in the sum of five hundred dollars and other proper relief." The replevin suit demanded the return of "one black and white yoke of steers, one black cow, and calf and one prairie plow," together with twenty dollars damages for the unlawful detention of the same. The exceedingly modest demand for money reparation in all these cases would seem to indicate that the modern damage suit, which has gradually attained such profitable proportions, had not yet come into vogue.

With three suits against his first client on hand at one time we may well imagine that Lincoln, the young barrister, was in many respects a busy man. The record shows, as his first step, a plea filed October 5, 1836, containing the conventional denial of the alleged trespasses in support of which he puts himself "upon the country." On the same day, with a view either to gain time or in some way embarrass the plaintiff, or both, he files the affidavit of his client reciting the fact that, as the plaintiff is a young man

without family or property, and the court officers are in danger of losing their fees, he should therefore be required to furnish a bond for costs. On the following day, much to the surprise of the defendant and his counsel, the required bond for costs was duly executed and filed. The skirmish for vantage-ground was now becoming brisk and animated. The next move on Lincoln's part was to draw up and file an account which he undertakes to "exhibit and prove as an offset" to the demand on assumpsit containing sundry items illustrative of commercial values then current on the frontier. With the exception of one line added by Stuart the entire account is in Lincoln's hand as follows:

James P. Hawthorn to David Wooldridge Dr.

To Boarding from the first of April until the first day of November 1835 at $1–50 cents per week being 30 weeks 4 days	$45.75
To use of waggon & team from first of April till first of November 1836.	$90.00
1834	
To 11 bushels of wheat @ 75	8.25
1836 Jan'y 8 Cash lent	100.00
" May & June Breaking 10 acres of Prairy	20.00
	$264.00
To money lent to enter land, afterwards entered in the name of your brother	50.00

What next followed before the final encounter we do not know, for the record is silent. The cases were now at issue, but for some reason, which even Mr. Herndon did not know, the term of court was suffered to adjourn without conclusive action. The next term found the combatants still apart and seemingly reluctant to measure arms. But meanwhile the peacemaker had not been idle, for March 17, 1837, the parties by their counsel came into court with a report of the settlement of all pending litigation and asked

that the case be dismissed. The record shows that this was promptly done. In the assumpsit case judgment by agreement was entered against the plaintiff for costs; in the replevin case against the defendant; and in the trespass case that item was equally divided between the two. The judge duly signed the record, the parties in all probability withdrew from the old court-house in Hoffman's Row, and thus ended Abraham Lincoln's first lawsuit.

The first case in the Supreme Court of Illinois in which Lincoln appeared was that of Scammon *vs.* Cline, reported in 3rd Ills. p. 456. It was an action relating to the conflict of jurisdiction between two counties in the State, Boone and Jo Daviess. Mr. Scammon, the plaintiff in error, was himself a lawyer of more or less prominence in Chicago. Mr. Lincoln appeared for the other side, but his plea, a denial, was in the handwriting of his friend James H. Matheney. The case was begun during the April, 1839, term of the Boone Circuit Court. The opinion of the Supreme Court reversing the judgment of the lower court was rendered February 24, 1841.

The last public appearance of Lincoln in the trial of a cause was in the United States District Court in Springfield June 20, 1860. This was in the month following his nomination at Chicago, after which event we may well conclude that he was so deeply absorbed in the race for President he could ill afford to give any time to the practice of law. The action, entitled Dawson *vs.* Ennis, included a demand of ten thousand dollars damages for the sale, in Morgan County, Illinois, in violation of an agreement to the contrary, of an improved double plow on which a patent right had been obtained. The declaration was written

James P. Hawthorn to David Wooldridge Dr

To Boarding from the first day of April until the first of November 1835. at $1.50 cents per week being 30 weeks & 4 days $45.75

1836 To use of Waggon & team from first of April
Jan 18 viz till first of November 1836 $90.00

1834 To 11 bushels of wheat @ 75. 8.25

1836. Jan 18 Cash paid 100.00

May & June. Breaking 10 acres of Prairie 20.00

To Money lent to enter land, expenses incurred in the name of your brother 50 00

$264.00

James P. Hawthorn
vs
David Wooldridge } In Trespass

The defendant, David Wooldridge, being sworn says that he verily believes, that the said plaintiff is unable to pay the costs of this suit, and that the officers of this Court will be in danger of of losing their costs in said suit unless the said plaintiff be ruled to give security therefor. He says that said plaintiff is a young man and without family and that he has not to the said defendants knowledge, any real, or personal property out of which the costs could be made.

David Wooldridge

PAPERS IN LINCOLN'S FIRST CASE, HAWTHORN *vs.* WOOLDRIDGE

and signed by Mr. Lincoln, who appeared for the plaintiff along with John A. McClernand and Isaac J. Ketcham, of Jacksonville. John M. Palmer represented the defense. On June 20, 1860, as noted, Lincoln argued the cause of the plaintiff, whereupon the court took the case under advisement. The record shows no further action till March 9, 1861, when a finding was made for the defendant and judgment entered against Lincoln's client for costs. It will thus be seen that, when we view Lincoln's legal career as a whole, we can hardly resist the conclusion that he was practically unsuccessful both in his first and last suit.

A word as to Lincoln's law partnerships, of which there were three. The first, with John T. Stuart, began April 27, 1837, and continued till April 14, 1841. It was promptly followed by the second with Stephen T. Logan, which terminated September 20, 1843. Immediately thereafter Lincoln was joined by William H. Herndon, and that partnership continued till, in the language of Herndon, it was "dissolved by the bullet of John Wilkes Booth in April, 1865."

As indicative of his regard for his law partners it may be said that in the spring of the year following his inauguration as President, he directed the Secretary of War to appoint Judge Logan one of three commissioners authorized to investigate and audit all unsettled claims against the War Department at Cairo, Illinois. The other members of the commission were George S. Boutwell, of Massachusetts, and Charles A. Dana, of New York. Mr. Dana related that after the commission had been at its labors two days Judge Logan was compelled by illness to resign. The next year Lincoln tendered Herndon a similar appointment, describing it in his telegram as "a job at St. Louis

at $5 a day and mileage," but which Herndon delicned. So far as known Lincoln made no offer to Stuart, due probably to the fact that the latter was elected to Congress in 1862 and therefore disqualified from holding any other office.

We have the warrant of Herndon for the statement that Lincoln was one of the clearest and most unerring thinkers the bar of Illinois ever produced. Of course, his integrity, his humanity, his kindness have not been overlooked; in fact, have in some instances been overplayed; but too much cannot be said of his wonderful intellect and profound ability in the realm of reason. Of this pronounced and marvelous equipment Lincoln was duly aware; more than that, it can be truthfully said, he was not only conscious but in reality more or less vain of it. It will be remembered that during a ride with Herndon to Petersburg Lincoln, after relating to his partner the history of his mother's origin and descent, alluded to his unusual analytical and reasoning powers, that which distinguished him from so many other men, frankly contending that he inherited it from his mother. According to the testimony of Herndon, Lincoln did not say this boastfully, but because both he and Herndon knew that his strength in this regard was conceded to him by practically every other member of the bar. All of which emphasizes the axiom enunciated by John Hay that no really great man was ever modest.

Although a good lawyer it is doubtful if Lincoln held the law in any higher esteem than his colleagues; in fact, it looked, sometimes, as if he lost sight of its standing or value as a profession and viewed it rather as a voca-

tion — simply as a means of gaining a livelihood. Judges Logan and Davis were more deeply absorbed in it as a profession, but it was only that it might yield them greater financial returns, because both of them were careful and ambitious men, both accumulating comfortable fortunes. On the other hand, with a strong and ineradicable bent in the direction of politics, Lincoln seemed to care less for the material end of things. Before me lies one of Lincoln's account books, a glance over which will indicate the scope and extent of his practice. On the first page it is marked, "Day Book of Lincoln & Herndon"; and in another place, "Lincoln & Herndon's Fee Book." The entries are mostly in Lincoln's hand. It comprises the record of a hundred and eighty-two cases. In one of them the fee charged is only $2.50; in two it is $3; in sixty-four, $5; in five, $7; in sixty-three, $10; in five, $50; in one, $100, and in the remainder from $15 to $25. The total is slightly in excess of $2000 representing over three years' business. The book illustrates the crude and primitive way in which Lincoln and his partner kept trace of their business. Here is one entry:

Scott *vs.* Busher (for Def't.)
To attending case in Menard Cir. Court if it ends where it is.
Paid. $20.00

Here is another — tried before a justice of the peace:

Negro *vs.* Robert Smith (for Deft.)
To attending case of Negro Bob. J.P. $5.00

This is how they kept the record of their partnership accounts:

Stevenson & Wardwell *vs.* Garrett (for Defts)
To attending case in Sup. Court Dec. Term 1846 $10.00

Roswell Munsill *vs.* Temple (for Plff in Error)
To attending case in Sup. Court,
By note $10.00. Note mislaid and cannot be found.
Later — paid cash in full of note

Mrs. Little *vs.* Little's Estate (for Deft)
To attending to case before J. Probate $10.00
(Dan & Sam Little bound for this)

Across the lines of this entry are written "Incorrect," and again "Not Right."

G. B. Merryman *vs.* Lake (for Plff)
To attending to case — Cir. Court $10.00
(½ goes to Logan)

A few items from the account or fee book kept by the firm of Stuart & Lincoln, a portion of which I was enabled to secure in Springfield many years ago, may not be without interest. The entries are all in Lincoln's hand and relate to cases in which both he and Stuart were interested and within a year or more after their partnership was formed. A glance at the fees set down opposite each case will serve to indicate how lucrative the practice of the newly established firm was. In the absence of evidence to the contrary, it is fair to assume there was an equal division of the proceeds. Following is copied from one page of the book:

E. C. Ross
To Stuart & Lincoln Dr.
1837 — April — To attendance at trial of right of J. F. Davis property before Moffett $5.00

Mather Lamb & Co.
To Stuart & Lincoln Dr.
1837 — April — To attendance at trial of J. F. Davis property before Moffett $5.00

Lucinda Mason
To Stuart & Lincoln Dr.
1837 — Oct — To obtaining assignment of Dower $5.00

[redacted]

Matter, Sand & Co
To Stuart & Lincoln Dr

1837. April. To attendance at trial of right of J. T. Davis' property before Moffett $5.00

William Herndon
To Stuart & Lincoln Dr.

1837. Oct. To Attachment case against Smith $5.00

Wiley & Wood
To Stuart & Lincoln Dr

1838 To defence of Chancery case of Ely
Cheat & cost to Stuart — $50.00
15.00
$35.00

Peyton L. Harrison
To Stuart & Lincoln Dr

1838 March. To case with Dickinson — $10.00

Allen & Stone
To Stuart & Lincoln Dr

1838. Oct. To case with Canton $2.50

ITEMS FROM STUART AND LINCOLN'S FEE BOOK

Wiley & Wood		
To Stuart & Lincoln	Dr.	
1837–8 To defence of Chancery case of Ely		$50.00
Credit by coat to Stuart		15.00
		$35.00
Peyton L. Harrison		
To Stuart & Lincoln	Dr.	
1838 — March —		
To case with Dickinson		$10.00
Allen & Stone		
To Stuart & Lincoln	Dr.	
1838 — Oct		
To case with Centre		$2.50

A word as to the size of the fees Lincoln was in the habit of charging his clients. In this respect he was exasperatingly modest. His associates at the bar, including Judge Davis, were out of patience with him. "Think," exclaimed one of them whom I knew in Springfield in the early eighties, "of a lawyer carrying a case through the Supreme Court for the paltry sum of ten dollars, and yet that seemed to be the limit of his charges." The following letter serves to indicate Mr. Lincoln's estimate of the value of a professional man's services:

SPRINGFIELD ILLS, Feb'y 21, 1856

MR. GEORGE P. FLOYD,
Quincy Ills.

DEAR SIR:

I have just received yours of the 16th with check on Flagg & Savage for twenty-five dollars. You must think I am a high-priced man. You are too liberal with your money. Fifteen dollars is enough for the job. I send you a receipt for fifteen dollars and return you a ten-dollar bill.

Yours truly

A. LINCOLN

The current impression that Lincoln chose Herndon as his law partner, because he could draw up the required papers and thus divide the office work, is a great popular misconception. Lincoln was not only the better office man of the two, but when at home really performed a large part of the clerical and office work. When it came to drawing up a paper, either a document to be used in court or to file away for preservation, Lincoln had no superior. He was careful to the point of punctiliousness. And this is all the more remarkable when we reflect that many of his colleagues were trained, college-bred men; whereas his entire attendance at school did not exceed eleven months; and he not only had never been permitted to enter college, but had never seen the inside of a college, academy, or high-school building till after he was old enough to go to Congress or practice law.

He rarely ever used a lead-pencil, preferring pen and ink. His penmanship as compared to Herndon's and the average lawyer of his day was small, uniform, and always legible. Herndon literally slung his ink over the page; Stuart's writing was both cramped and uneven; Davis's loose and irregular; and Judge Treat's so stilted and angular it was difficult to read. But it was not alone in penmanship that Lincoln excelled; he almost invariably spelled correctly. He sometimes spelled wagon with two *g*'s (and by some it has even been held that that is not always incorrect), but unlike many of his colleagues he rarely ever spelled judgment with two *e*'s. In the matter of punctuation he was likewise painstaking and correct. He never omitted a comma, and he used the semicolon with discrimination and taste. He had one peculiarity; frequently

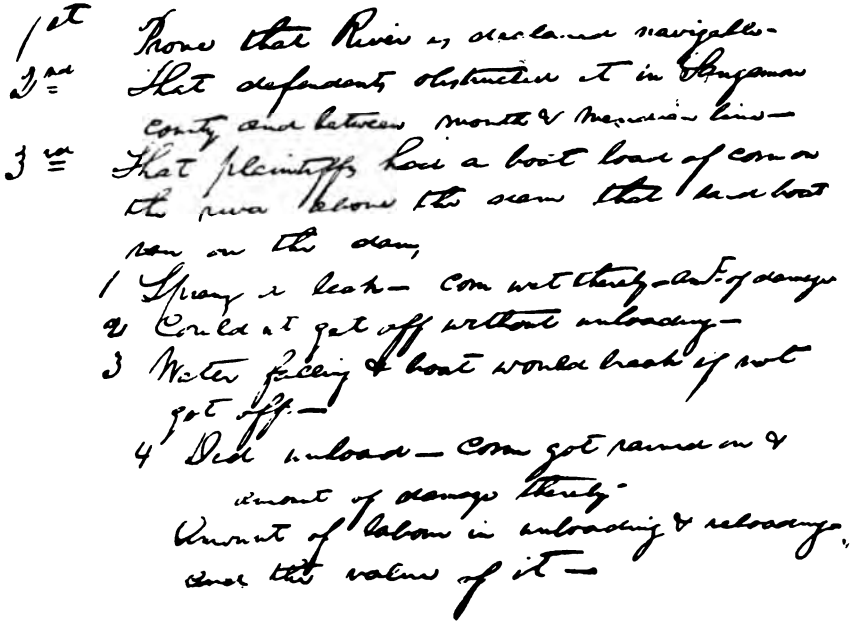
at the end of a sentence or paragraph using a short dash to indicate a full stop instead of the conventional period. To the writer, who has examined the court records of the various counties in Illinois in which Lincoln practiced law, and who has read so many pages of his manuscript as well as the thousands of pages written by his colleagues, a majority of whom paid no attention to punctuation, the matter of his accuracy and conformity to the rules of grammar becomes all the more wonderful and impressive. If so many of his associates at the bar who had enjoyed the benefits of college training displayed such indifferent scholarship and lack of skill, the question arises: Where did Lincoln acquire his genius and sagacity?

Of the one hundred and seventy-six cases which Mr. Lincoln either individually or in association with his partners carried through the Supreme Court of Illinois, he won ninety-two; of the twelve cases tried in the United States District and Circuit Courts (of which, however, only ten were decided), he appears to have won seven; and of the three cases in the Supreme Court of the United States, he was successful in two. It would be difficult, if not well-nigh impossible, at this late day to fix accurately the limits of his practice in the lower or courts of original jurisdiction in Illinois. The famous Eighth Circuit over which he traveled so long consisted in 1853 of eight counties: Sangamon, Logan, McLean, Woodford, Tazewell, DeWitt, Champaign, and Vermilion. In 1857 Sangamon, Woodford, and Tazewell were transferred to another circuit. The zenith of his practice was during the partnership with Herndon and between the years 1852 and 1858. After that the siren voice of politics began to lure him away from the profession.

In order to illustrate the character and scope of his practice and thus determine the kind of lawyer he was, a brief retrospect of some of the most notable cases in which he appeared is essential.

Bailey *vs.* Cromwell, an action appealed from Tazewell County, reached the Supreme Court of Illinois in December, 1839, two years after his admission to the bar. Mr. Lincoln represented the appellant and Stephen T. Logan the other side. Of his conduct of this case Mr. Lincoln was more or less proud, and the case itself has been generously and frequently cited in the appellate courts of other States. It was in the presentation of this cause that Mr. Lincoln maintained that it was a presumption of law in the State of Illinois that every person is free without regard to color; that where the consideration of a promissory note was shown to have been a negro girl, and that, at the time of the sale, it was agreed between the parties that before the payment of the note should be demanded the payee should produce the necessary papers and indenture to prove that the girl was a slave or bound to service under the laws of the State of Illinois, and such papers were not produced, though demanded, there was no consideration for the note, and that it was therefore void, as the sale of a free person was an illegal transaction.

The case of Carman *vs.* Glasscock, another one of Lincoln's early ventures, was tried in the Circuit Court of Sangamon County, also in 1839. It related to a controversy over a fish-trap dam erected across the Sangamon River; and incidentally the question of the navigability of the latter stream. The brief of Lincoln's argument was more or less suggestive of the flatboat ride on the bosom


1st Prove that River is declared navigable—
2nd That defendant obstructed it in Sangamon
County and between mouth & Mercer line—
3rd That plaintiffs had a boat load of corn
the pres below the dam that could not
pass on the dam,
1 Sprang a leak— Corn wet thereby—Lost of damage
2 Could not get off without unloading—
3 Water falling & boat would break if not
got off.—
4 Did unload— Corn got rained on &
amount of damage thereby.
Amount of labor in unloading & reloading,
and the value of it—

LINCOLN'S BRIEF IN A CASE INVOLVING THE NAVIGABILITY OF THE SANGAMON RIVER

of the river which he and John Hanks took when they floated down to New Orleans in 1831. The original, which is in Lincoln's hand and is still preserved, reads as follows:

1st Prove that River is declared navigable —
2nd. That defendants obstructed it in Sangamon county and between mouth & meridian line —
3rd. That plaintiffs had a boat load of corn on the river above the dam; that said boat ran on the dam,
1 Sprang leak — corn wet thereby — am't of damages
2 Could n't get off without unloading —
3 Water falling & boat would break if not got off —
4 Did unload — corn got rained on & amount of damage thereby —
Amount of labor in unloading & reloading and the value of it.

CHAPTER XII

Green *vs.* Green, Lincoln's first divorce case—His dislike for divorce suits—His magnanimity in the trial of Samuel Rogers *vs.* Polly Rogers — His comment on the Miller *vs.* Miller petition — A pitiful story of marital discord — A slow collector — Rarely enforced collection of fees by suit — When in partnership with Logan brought one suit for fee — Retained by Illinois Central Railroad to enjoin McLean County from assessing road for taxation — Lincoln's letter to Brayman — Gains case in Supreme Court — Lincoln sues railroad company for his fee — History of transaction — Dividing fee with Herndon — One of Lincoln's first suits for personal injury — The Horological Cradle case — The slander suit of McKibben *vs.* Hart — Turning the fee over to his father — The Spink *vs.* Chiniquiy case settled by Lincoln — The Dungey *vs.* Spencer case as recalled by Lawrence Weldon — Fixing Lincoln's fee — Linder *vs.* Fleenor — How Lincoln proved the marriage — Dorman *vs.* Lane — Proposal by Lincoln to his associates that they join him and donate fees as a wedding present.

According to Herndon there was one kind of practice to which Mr. Lincoln as a lawyer was not favorably inclined, and that was suits for divorce; in fact, whenever practicable, he tried to discourage that sort of ligitation. Of course he sometimes appeared in divorce proceedings, but it was always with more or less reluctance. The first action brought by him to dissolve the "marriage bond," as he termed it, was that of Nancy Green *vs.* Aaron Green filed in the Sangamon Circuit Court September 4, 1837. Lincoln represented the wife, and succeeded in securing the divorce on the ground of desertion or abandonment for a given period. A year later, in the same court, he appeared in another case, that of Samuel Rogers *vs.* Polly Rogers, but this time in behalf of the husband. An affidavit executed by Lincoln in connection with the case indicates to what extent he could be chivalrous or forbearing when his professional duty required him to espouse the cause of a man in a contest with his wife. Following is a

copy of the original document which has been preserved:

State of Illinois
Sangamon County

A. Lincoln being first duly sworn says that he was employed as counsel in the case of Samuel Rogers *vs.* Polly Rogers for a Divorce; that he, the affiant, drew up the complainant's bill; that said complainant at that time told this affiant that he could prove that the said defendant had been guilty of adultery with one William Short while she lived with said complainant; but that affiant advised said complainant not to make the charge in his bill as there was other sufficient grounds upon which to obtain a divorce, to-wit, absence of more than two years.

A. LINCOLN

Sworn to and subscribed before me this 20th day of October 1838

WM. BUTLER CLERK

There is also in existence an affidavit by Samuel Rogers, the complainant, in which he recites that the charge of adultery was omitted from his bill at the instigation of his counsel, Mr. Lincoln, who opposed the allegation "for no other cause than through tenderness to defendant's character." One can hardly read Lincoln's affidavit in this case without wondering how many lawyers of this day and generation would, under like circumstances, be equally considerate and magnanimous.

While on the subject of divorce suits I can hardly refrain from adverting to one that deeply impressed and awakened Lincoln's sympathetic interest. It was brought by him during the partnership with Judge Logan, entitled George Miller *vs.* Elizabeth Miller, and was tried in Menard County. When one has read the lament of the luckless and discouraged husband he can doubtless account for Lincoln's sympathy, and appreciate the significance

of the brief memorandum penned on the back of one of the pleadings prepared by him for his use in the suit: "A pitiful story of marital discord." In his petition, written by Lincoln, the husband recites that he and Elizabeth Miller were married in Bath County, Kentucky, in 1829; that

after said marriage they continued to live together as man and wife, he doing and performing all the duties of an affectionate husband for two or three years when unhappy differences arose and without the fault of your orator she, the defendant, left the bed and board of your orator and went to her relatives; a short time passed and a reconciliation which your orator fondly but vainly hoped would be permanent took place between the defendant and him and she returned to his house; but in a short time she left again and after that frequent temporary reconciliations and separations occurred between them extending in time to the year 1834 when it was agreed between them that they would remove separately to Illinois, there meet, be finally reconciled and live together as man and wife; that they did so remove to Sangamon county, Illinois, where they soon met and, being encouraged by the defendant, your orator set about making preparation to live with her by procuring a house etc. when in a short time, without the fault of your orator, difficulties again arose extending in time up to the year 1836 when she, the defendant, announced to your orator her determination never to live with him again. Thus matters passed till the year 1841 when the defendant and your orator again met in Kentucky and at her instance agreed that on their return to Illinois they would meet and live in peace. Your orator further charges that he did in good faith endeavor to put said last named agreement into execution, but that on meeting the defendant in Menard county, Illinois, where she now resides and has resided since the formation of the county in the fall of 1841, she again announced to your orator her determination never to live with him again, since which time your orator has abandoned all hope of a reconciliation. And so your orator charges that the said defendant has wilfully deserted and absented herself from him

without any reasonable cause for more than two years. In tender consideration of all which your orator prays that on a final hearing of this cause your Honor will decree that the bonds of matrimony heretofore and now existing between said defendant and your orator be forever dissolved; and that your Honor will grant such other and further relief as equity may require.

Mr. Herndon is also authority for the statement that Lincoln was a poor collector. He disliked to attempt to collect his fee by suit; but there is abundant evidence that his partners were not quite so indulgent. In July, 1845, he filed a suit in the Sangamon Circuit Court against James D. Smith, executor of the last will and testament of William Trailor, deceased, in which a demand is made for the payment of one hundred dollars, being a fee due "For defending said Trailor against a charge of murdering one Fisher." The action was brought in the name of Logan & Lincoln and the declaration or complaint is in the handwriting of the latter. Another suit of like nature, a relic of the partnership with Herndon, was brought in the same court five years later. The defendant was John B. Moffett and the declaration was written by Lincoln, who describes the plaintiffs as "Abraham Lincoln and William H. Herndon doing business in the name of Lincoln & Herndon." The demand is based on an account containing two items; one, a fee of one hundred dollars for bringing a suit in the Sangamon Circuit Court and fifty dollars for carrying it through the Supreme Court; but the record shows that the plaintiffs recovered judgment for only seventy-five dollars and costs.

A third suit, brought by Lincoln for an attorney fee, and the most noteworthy in his career, will require more extended mention. In the summer of 1853 the authorities

of McLean County, Illinois, believing that all the land in that county should pay its proportionate share of taxes, decided to place on the assessment rolls all the property in that county belonging to the Illinois Central Railroad Company. This was done in the face of the fact that, by the action of the Illinois legislature, that corporation had been granted exemption from taxation conditioned that it should pay seven per cent of its gross earnings into the State treasury. The railroad company at once brought suit to enjoin the county from collecting the tax and to that end sought to retain the services of Lincoln in their behalf. as the following letter will show:

PEKIN, ILLS. Oct. 3, 1853

M. BRAYMAN ESQ.
DEAR SIR:

Neither the county of McLean nor any one else on its behalf has yet made any engagement with me in relation to its suit with the Illinois Central Railroad, on the subject of taxation — I am now free to make any engagement for the Road; and if you think fit you may "count me in." Please write me on receipt of this — I shall be here at least ten days.

Yours truly
A. LINCOLN

Lincoln was duly employed and four days after the above letter was written, Mr. Brayman, who was of counsel for the railroad company, sent to Lincoln, through the Marine Bank of Springfield, a retainer fee of two hundred and fifty dollars. In the lower court the case went against the railroad company and an appeal was promptly taken to the Supreme Court at Springfield. "At the hearing in the Supreme Court," relates Mr. James F. Joy, who was the general solicitor for the railroad, "both Lincoln and

myself argued the case for the appellants, he being the junior and I the senior counsel. John T. Stuart and Stephen T. Logan, both former partners of Lincoln, represented the appellee. The case was long under advisement, and later the court complied with my request and gave us a rehearing. Mr. Lincoln and I did the best we could in the reargument with the result that the case was decided in our favor."

Later when it came to settling the question of attorneys' fees, Lincoln, on learning that the railroad company had paid Mr. Joy twelve hundred dollars, wrote the latter that for his services he would like to have the company give him a particular section of land, describing it, saying that for once in his life he thought he was entitled to a large fee. This the officers of the road declined to do, claiming that the land was covered by a mortgage or some other encumbrance. It was then that he rendered a bill for five thousand dollars, less the retainer fee of two hundred and fifty dollars already advanced, which the company also declined to pay. "I think there would have been no difficulty with Mr. Lincoln's bill," related Joy, "if I had charged as, perhaps, I ought to have done, five thousand dollars. The time for such fees as the lawyers now ask had not arrived, and my own charge for the arguments in the case was only twelve hundred dollars. I think now my charge was a small one for the service rendered. The railroad company, after declining to pay Mr. Lincoln the five thousand dollars he demanded because they thought the fee was too large, then made him this proposition: 'Bring suit against the company for the amount demanded and no attempt will be made to defend against it. If by

the testimony of other lawyers it shall appear to be a fair charge and there shall be a judgment for the amount, then we shall be justified in paying it.'"

In compliance with the recommendations of the railroad officials Lincoln brought the required suit for his fee in the Circuit Court of McLean County. Several years ago I read the declaration in his own handwriting. It was then on file in the court-house at Bloomington. Following is a copy of his account or demand as made out and presented to the company as well as the written opinion of six of his fellow lawyers who certified to the reasonableness of his fee:

The Illinois Central Railroad Company
To A. Lincoln Dr.

To professional services in the case of the Illinois Central Railroad Company against the County of McLean argued in the Supreme Court of Illinois and decided at the December Term 1855 $5000

We, the undersigned, members of Illinois Bar, understanding that the above entitled cause was twice argued in the Supreme Court; and that the judgment therein decided the question of the claim of counties and other minor municipal corporations to tax the property of said Railroad Company and settle said questions against said claim and in favor of said Railroad Company are of opinion that the sum above charged as a fee is not unreasonable.

GRANT GOODRICH
N. B. JUDD
ARCHIBALD WILLIAMS
N. H. PURPLE
O. H. BROWNING
R. S. BLACKWELL

Of the six men who thus approved Lincoln's claim, one became a Congressman and later an ambassador to a European court; one a United States District Judge in a

The Illinois Central Railroad Company
To A. Lincoln Dr.

To professional services in the case of the Illinois Central Railroad Company against the County of DeWitt, argued in the Supreme Court of the State of Illinois, and decided at December Term 1855 $5000.00.

We the undersigned members of the Illinois Bar, understanding that the above entitled cause was twice argued in the Supreme Court; and that the judgment therein decides the question of the claim of Counties and other minor municipal corporations, to tax the property of said Railroad Company, and settles said question against said claim, and in favor of said Railroad Company, are of opinion that the sum above charged, as a fee, is not unreasonable.

Grant Goodrich
N. B. Judd
Richard Yates
N. H. Purple
O. H. Browning
R. S. Blackwell.

LINCOLN'S BILL AGAINST THE ILLINOIS CENTRAL RAILROAD COMPANY, WITH COPY OF OPINION SIGNED BY FELLOW LAWYERS

Western State; another a United States Senator and also a member of the President's Cabinet at Washington; and the remainder were three of the ablest and most successful lawyers of the Illinois bar. When the case was called in court the railroad company suffered the judgment to go by default, and later, within the period fixed by law, paid to the clerk of the court the required five thousand dollars less the two hundred and fifty dollars already advanced to Lincoln as a retainer. Although the name of Herndon does not appear in the record of the case as of counsel, it does not follow that he had no part in it or that Lincoln was disposed to overlook him. "The judgment was finally paid," related Herndon, "and Lincoln gave me my half. He brought the money down from Bloomington one evening and sent me word to come to the office. It was after dark and when he had pushed my share of the proceeds across the table to me, he covered it for an instant with his hand, smiled, and said: 'Billy, it seems to me it will be bad taste on your part to keep on saying the severe things I have heard from you about railroads and other corporations. The truth is, instead of criticizing them, you and I ought to thank God for letting this one fall into our hands.'"

As this was the largest attorney fee ever received by Mr. Lincoln, it may not be amiss to note also the smallest one; which was two dollars and a half paid to him for his services in a suit in the fall of 1838, one half of which went to his partner, John T. Stuart. In another case the firm of Stuart & Lincoln made a charge of fifty dollars, but their clients were either reluctant or unable to pay the entire sum in cash; for the record of the transaction in the book, entered by Lincoln, shows that a coat, furnished to Stuart

and valued at fifteen dollars, was accepted as a partial payment.

By the time Mr. Lincoln was nearing the end of his career as a practicing lawyer, the modern damage suit against common carriers and other corporations, especially where based on personal injury, was coming into vogue. Lincoln's experience in that line, as indicated by several cases to which Herndon called my attention, was necessarily limited. One of the earliest was an action brought by him during the partnership with Stuart in which George Stockton demands of James Tolby a hundred dollars for damages to "a cooking stove" in transit between Beardstown and Springfield. Tolby drove "a conveyance for hire" between the points named and was therefore liable as a common carrier. Another case, and probably the first personal injury suit he ever brought against a common carrier, was that of Grubb *vs.* Fink and Walker tried in 1852. The defendants were operating a stage-coach between Rushville and Frederick which overturned one day resulting in a serious injury to one of the passengers. In his account of the accident Mr. Lincoln is sufficiently careful and minute in his averments. After describing the plaintiff's long list of "cuts, bruises, wounds, and divers broken bones," he recites the payment by him of large sums of money paid for the services of physicians and surgeons in the endeavor to be cured of the fractures, bruises, and injuries, and concludes with a demand for damages of one thousand dollars. Another action, that of Jasper Harris *vs.* Great Western Railway Company, was tried in Sangamon County in 1854. The plaintiff was a brakeman whose "right foot, ankle, leg, and thigh while in the service of

said company, were so greatly torn, crushed and broken that amputation of his said right limb above the knee was necessary." It was Lincoln's first suit against a railroad company for personal injury and included a demand for ten thousand dollars in damages. The declaration, though signed Lincoln & Herndon, was written by Lincoln, and when contrasted with the phraseology of a bill of complaint as lawyers now word such things is about as crude and primitive as the machinery and appliances of that early period appear when compared to the ponderous and elaborate equipment now in use by the railroads of this day.

Perhaps no case in which Lincoln figured awakened his interest more readily and completely than an action, entitled Hildreth *vs.* Turner, appealed to the Supreme Court of Illinois from Logan County in the spring of 1854. It related to the validity of a patent, but involved no great legal principle and was otherwise of no especial significance save as Lincoln's connection therewith gave it prominence. In February, 1853, one Alexander Edmonds, a mechanical genius in the town of Mount Pulaski, invented what he called "The Horological Cradle," a contrivance to be "rocked by machinery with a weight running on one or more pulleys; the cradle constituting the pendulum and which, being wound up, would rock itself, thus saving the continual labor to mother and nurses of rocking the cradle." The brief description by the inventor suffices to indicate the objects and character of the proposed apparatus, but notwithstanding its doubtful value from a practical standpoint there was something about it that attracted the interest and attention of Mr. Lincoln. Eventually a disagreement between the inventor

of the machine and a man who was induced to advance capital for its manufacture led to a lawsuit in which Lincoln & Herndon represented one side of the controversy when it reached the Supreme Court. "Although Lincoln and I were duly retained," related Herndon, "Mr. Lincoln, owing to his natural bent for the study of mechanical appliances, soon became so enamoured of the case that he assumed entire charge of our end of it. The model of the machine was for a time exhibited in a store window in town and eventually reached our office where Mr. Lincoln became deeply absorbed in it. He would dilate at great length on its merits for the benefit of our callers or any one else who happened into the office and manifested the least interest in it. Although the papers in the case indicated that Lincoln & Herndon were of counsel, I recall that I had but little beyond a nominal part in it. All the papers were drawn by Mr. Lincoln himself, a division of our labors to which I readily consented because, in view of my apparent lack of faith in the enterprise, I apprehend he suspected I was willing that he should assume the entire responsibility of winning or losing the suit."

The record of the case recites that the inventor professed to have obtained a "patent for said invention and had been exhibiting a model of the same; that the patent right would be valuable and could be sold for a large amount of money, etc."; but before the case was decided it was discovered that Edmonds had no letters patent for the cradle, its machinery or mode of operation, but only for an ornamental design for a "horological cradle" as set out in the specifications. The court ruled against the patentability of the contrivance, holding that every one should

be presumed to know that a baby cradle would not be patentable by the description so far as the application of its use is concerned.

While the case was under consideration by the Supreme Court, the model was brought into the room and set to going — a proceeding in which Lincoln was plainly interested as shown by his willingness to enlighten the judges, some of whom ventured to make inquiries regarding the *modus operandi*. Although the inventor claimed to have disposed of his rights in the States of Mississippi, Georgia, Alabama, Florida, and South Carolina for ten thousand dollars, he made no mention of his interest in Illinois, Indiana, Missouri, and other near-by States, probably because the people in those localities, like Herndon, had seen the device at a range close enough to make them more or less cautious in the investment of their surplus capital.

On the way to his office from the court-room after the case was over, Lincoln was halted by an old friend in the person of John W. Bunn, the banker, who related the incident to me shortly before his recent death in Springfield. "Mr. Lincoln," said Bunn, "was telling me about the case and included a description of the apparatus, although I had seen the model of it in operation in a store window several times. After agreeing with him that it was rather an ingenious piece of mechanism, I then ventured to ask him how to stop the thing when in motion. 'There's the rub,' he replied, laughing, 'and I reckon I'll have to answer you as I did the judge who asked the same question. The thing's like some of the glib and interesting talkers you and I know, John; when it gets to going it does n't know when to stop.'"

The shrinkage in a lawyer's practice in Lincoln's day attributable to the lack of bodily injury suits was more than counterbalanced by the then popular slander suit. It was a most abundant source of litigation and hardly a term of court was allowed to pass without one or more actions of that kind. The money demand for damages was invariably large, and even though the injured party sometimes recovered judgment for the full amount demanded, he frequently waived payment of all but a nominal sum. Of these primitive and sprightly contests Lincoln had his proportionate share. In Coles County, Illinois, in the fall of 1843, in conjunction with Usher F. Linder, he appeared for the plaintiff in the slander suit of Bagley *vs.* Vanmeter. Evidently Lincoln's prospects, so far as a generous fee is concerned, were not very encouraging, for a document written by him and signed by his client, the plaintiff, has been found in which the latter, referring to the judgment in his behalf which he expects, makes the following pertinent reservation regarding the pay due his attorneys: "I assign twenty dollars to Usher F. Linder and thirty dollars to Logan & Lincoln if said judgment shall amount to so much." Unfortunately for all concerned, when the records were all made and the money paid in, the judgment yielded a total of eighty dollars. In the case of Thomas McKibben, who brought suit against Jonathan Hart demanding two thousand dollars damages because the latter had called him a horsethief, Mr. Lincoln represented the plaintiff. Trial took place during the May term, 1845, of the Circuit Court of Coles County, Illinois. Mr. Lincoln's father, Thomas Lincoln, lived a few miles south of Charleston, the county seat, which will

doubtless account for the fact that the latter's son figured so frequently in the litigation of that locality. In the case mentioned, Lincoln secured for his client a judgment for about two hundred dollars, of which thirty-five dollars was assigned to him for his fee and which he deposited with the clerk of the court with instructions to pay the same to his father. In due time Thomas Lincoln trudged over to Charleston, where the money which, doubtless, was a welcome addition to the old gentleman's meager income, was turned over to him. The receipt, drawn up by the clerk, was duly signed, but the name, Thomas Lincoln, was written by his stepson, John D. Johnston.

One of the most noted actions for slander in which Mr. Lincoln participated was that of Spink *vs.*Chiniquiy begun in Kankakee County, Illinois, a case in which Charles Chiniquiy, a priest, was sued for having falsely charged that Peter Spink, one of his parishioners, had been guilty of perjury. The parties and most of the witnesses were French Catholics. Mr. Lincoln and Leonard Swett represented Father Chiniquiy. It was a well-known and warmly contested case. "Father Chiniquiy was plucky," related Henry C. Whitney who was present and remembered the trial, "and plead justification; and preparations were made for a 'fight to the finish,' not only by the two principals, but by the two respective neighborhoods in which they lived, for eventually almost everybody became involved. A change of venue brought the case to Champaign County, and when the term came on the principals, their lawyers and witnesses and an immense retinue of followers, came to Urbana. The hotels were monopolized and a large number camped out. After a tedious

and long-drawn-out trial the jury disagreed. Next term the crowd in no wise diminished returned, camp outfits, musicians, parrots, pet dogs, and all. The prospect was that all their scandal would have to be aired again; but Mr. Lincoln, who abhorred that class of litigation, in which there was no utility, and dreading the outlook, set to work and finally effected a compromise."

The formal decree reciting the terms of the settlement of the case which follows was prepared by Lincoln and is an excellent specimen of his concise and orderly presentation of a legal proposition:

Peter Spink
vs.
Charles Chiniquiy.

This day came the parties and the defendant denies that he has ever charged, or believed the plaintiff to be guilty of Perjury; that whatever he has said from which such a charge could be inferred, he said on the information of others, protesting his own disbelief in the charge; and that he now disclaims any belief in the truth of said charge against said plaintiff. It is therefore, by agreement of the parties, ordered that the suit be dismissed, each party paying his own cost — the defendant to pay his part of the cost heretofore ordered to be paid by said plaintiff.

Two more slander suits, in which Lincoln had a part and which were carefully explained to me by Herndon, I ought not to omit. One was the case of Dungey *vs.* Spencer tried at the town of Clinton, in Dewitt County, in the spring of 1855. Lincoln represented Dungey, the plaintiff, and Lawrence Weldon, afterwards a member of the United States Court of Claims, the defendant. The basis of the action, as set out in the declaration in Lincoln's hand, and for which several thousand dollars in damages was asked, was the charge that the defendant "in the presence

of divers good citizens falsely and maliciously spoke and uttered of and concerning the plaintiff, these false scandalous, malicious, and defamatory words: 'Black Bill (meaning the plaintiff) is a negro and it will be easily proved if called for.'" It was a family quarrel, Dungey, who was a Portuguese and somewhat dark complexioned, having married Spencer's sister. The law of Illinois made it a crime for a negro to marry a white woman, and hence the words were slanderous. It is unnecessary to dwell on the details of the trial. It suffices to state that Lincoln won, recovering for his client, the plaintiff, a judgment for six hundred dollars, of which amount the latter on the advice of his counsel remitted four hundred dollars; the defendant meanwhile assuming payment of Lincoln's fee and the costs of the suit.

"At this juncture," related Mr. Weldon later in life, "Mr. Lincoln proposed to leave the question of the amount of his fee to my associates, Mr. C. H. Moore and myself. We protested against this and insisted that he should fix the amount of his own fee. After a few moments' thought he said: 'Well, gentlemen, don't you think I have honestly earned twenty-five dollars?' We were astonished, and had he said one hundred dollars it would have been nearer what we expected. The judgment was a large one for those days: he had attended the case at two terms of court, had been engaged for two days in a hotly contested suit, and his client's adversary was going to pay the bill. The simplicity of his character in money matters is well illustrated by the fact that for all this service he only charged twenty-five dollars."

"In his argument to the jury," continued Weldon, "Mr.

Lincoln was both entertaining and effective. A dramatic and powerful stroke was his direct reference to Spencer's accusation that Dungey was a 'nigger.' It had a curious touch of the ludicrous by his pronunciation of a word which, instead of detracting, seemed to add to the effect. I hear him now as he said: 'Gentlemen of the jury, my client is not a Negro, though it is no crime to be a Negro — no crime to be born with a black skin. But my client is not a Negro. His skin may not be as white as ours, but I say he is not a Negro, though he may be a Moor.'" The humor in the situation was due to the fact that the lawyer who assisted Mr. Weldon on the other side of the case was Mr. C. H. Moore, an attorney living in the village of Clinton where the case was tried, and when Mr. Lincoln's attention was called to his play upon words by Judge Davis he smiled and replied: "Of course, your Honor, I mean a Moor, not our friend C. H. Moore; and I therefore repeat that my client may be a Moor but he is not a Negro."

The recollection by Mr. Weldon of Lincoln's proverbially generous treatment of his clients in the matter of fees prompts me to repeat an incident narrated to me by John W. Bunn, the veteran banker, who was also a client and close friend of Lincoln and who outlived all the other financiers of Lincoln's day in Springfield. "On the way from his home to the office or *vice versa*," said Mr. Bunn to me, "Mr. Lincoln and I frequently walked a short distance together. One morning he was telling me about a lawsuit the day before in which he succeeded in gaining possession of a farm for one of his clients. For his services he had made a charge of two hundred dollars, but said he had been thinking the matter over and was beginning

to wonder if that wasn't, after all, rather too stiff a fee. He asked my opinion, but before I could answer we espied, a short distance ahead of us, Ben. Edwards, the lawyer who represented the other side of the case, and lost it. When we overtook him Lincoln, curious to learn whether the fee he charged equaled or exceeded that of his opponent, ventured to inquire how he fared in settling with his client. 'Very well,' answered Edwards. 'My man said that inasmuch as we had lost he hoped I would be proportionately merciful when I fixed my fee. And I was: for I let him off for three hundred dollars.'"

The record of one slander suit tried by Lincoln I read with not a little interest. It is not especially noteworthy, but I cannot refrain from referring to it because the vital incident around which it revolves, as outlined by Lincoln in one of his own written pleas, took place within a few feet of the very spot where I was born in the town of Greencastle, Indiana. As I gathered the facts from the original papers in Herndon's hands, it developed that early in the summer of 1847 John Linder, in the Circuit Court of Coles County, Illinois, brought an action for slander against Abraham N. Fleenor, claiming a thousand dollars in damages. The grievance against Fleenor was that he had falsely charged Linder with perjury, because the latter, a short time previously, had testified before the Grand Jury that Levi B. Fleenor and Emeline Fleenor, a woman with whom he was living as a wife, were not married to each other. Lincoln was retained by the defendant, and in his plea, after reciting how "wilfully, maliciously and corruptly" the plaintiff had testified that the said Levi B. and Emeline Fleenor had not been married to each

other, concluded the paragraph by the direct and unqualified averment, "when in truth the said Levi B. Fleenor and the said Emeline had theretofore been married to each other in the said town of Greencastle in the State of Indiana." This last allegation Linder, the plaintiff, promptly denied, adding that the parties could not have been so married without his knowing it; that they did not stop in Greencastle more than fifteen minutes (they were migrating overland from Indiana to Coles County, Illinois), and that the said Emeline did not leave the wagon during the interval, thus implying that, as the contracting parties did not stand on *terra firma*, there could have been no binding marriage. But the logic of this proposition did not commend itself to Lincoln, and its only effect was to evoke from him a repetition of the statement that the marriage did take place in the town of Greencastle as alleged. Even though the dainty foot of the gentle Emeline may not have been lifted from the wagon during the fifteen minutes' sojourn in the Indiana village, it did not necessarily follow that an accommodating parson or squire was not conveniently near by and himself standing on the ground so as to solemnize properly the marital union which, according to the contention of Lincoln and his client, undoubtedly followed.

It is unnecessary to dwell further on the details of this quaint, pioneer controversy beyond relating that a judgment was rendered against Lincoln's client for a thousand dollars, of which amount nine hundred and fifty dollars was remitted, thus leaving due a net balance of only fifty dollars. The averments in Lincoln's hand were not facts of his own knowledge, but, like many other al-

legations incorporated in an attorney's plea, were based entirely on information furnished by his client. In this case the client, doubtless, misrepresented the facts; for a careful and thorough examination of the public records at the town of Greencastle, Indiana, fails to reveal any evidence of the marriage of the said Levi and Emeline Fleenor or any other members of the Fleenor family.

Another story of a Lincoln lawsuit and I pass to other incidents. The case of Dorman *vs.* Lane, appealed from Gallatin County, reached the Supreme Court of Illinois in 1842 and was in court for a long time. Briefly told, Rebecca Daimwood, an orphan girl, believing she had been defrauded in the settlement of her father's estate, brought suit against John Lane, her guardian, to recover certain lands sold by him, ostensibly, for her maintenance. Samuel D. Marshall, a Shawneetown lawyer, gained the case for the girl in the lower court, but Lane promptly appealed to the Supreme Court, whereupon Lincoln was retained to assist Marshall in the girl's behalf. Lyman Trumbull appeared for Lane. "The action was warmly contested," said Franklin M. Eddy, son of Henry Eddy, one of the lawyers associated with Trumbull, "but Lincoln, unaided, beat them all as the record of the Supreme Court easily proves." Meanwhile Miss Daimwood had married William Dorman, a young farmer, and he therefore became a party to the litigation.

In due season the case was disposed of and the time came for the lawyers to put their heads together and reach some understanding regarding the size of their respective fees. As the case progressed, Mr. Lincoln, aside from his professional relation, had become more or less interested

in the fortunes of Rebecca and her young husband. Though the latter was poor, he was also both deserving and ambitious; and, in addition, there were in the bearing and history of the two some things that in various ways appealed to Lincoln's sympathy and sense of justice. When, therefore, Marshall reminded him that their clients, Dorman and his wife, were anxious to learn how much of a fee he was expecting from them, Lincoln answered that, so far as his connection with the case extended, there would be no charge; that if in this case he had gained any substantial advantage the thanks of his grateful clients were sufficient remuneration for what he had accomplished. Having thus expressed himself, he authorized Marshall to assure the newly married couple that they might appropriately consider his service in their behalf as a willing though somewhat belated wedding present.

"Dorman was a very strong Democrat," is the testimony of Frank M. Eddy, of Shawneetown, "but always voted for Samuel D. Marshall when he was a candidate for office. Dorman named his youngest boy by Rebecca for Marshall, and I heard him on more than one occasion say that, had his wife lived to bear him another son, he would have been named Abraham Lincoln. When Mr. Lincoln was a candidate for President in 1860, Dorman, in spite of his many Democratic friends, voted for him, and when the latter protested he only answered: 'Lincoln and Marshall recovered my wife's land and would not charge me a cent. Of course I honor them for it, and I intend to vote and fight for them as evidence of my gratitude.' I heard this from Dorman's lips many times, especially in 1860 when Mr. Lincoln first ran for President."

CHAPTER XIII

Lincoln seldom wrote briefs or legal arguments — Scarcely ever made notes — Of the few briefs he reduced to writing Herndon preserved but a portion — One was a petition for rehearing in Patterson *vs.* Edwards tried in the Supreme Court in 1845 — Slander suit between two women — Notable specimen of Lincoln's reasoning — Smith *vs.* Smith, suit on election bet — Vigorous denunciation of those who bet on elections — Hurd *vs.* Rock Island Bridge Company tried by Lincoln in United States Circuit Court in Chicago — Record of Lincoln's argument before the jury as delivered, preserved, and reproduced by Robert R. Hitt, the shorthand reporter — How Lincoln talked when he faced a jury — What he thought of Judge McLean.

ALTHOUGH skillful and efficient if not voluminous in the matter of drawing up pleadings and preparing papers generally, Mr. Lincoln rarely wrote out his speeches, briefs, or legal arguments; in fact, so reluctant was he to put his spoken utterance in manuscript form that in many instances he even neglected to prompt his memory by making notes. The result is that much of what has been put forth portraying his methods and achievements as an advocate or public speaker is in a large degree based, not on what he had taken the pains to commit to writing, but on the personal recollection of others who claim to have been present and heard him when he expressed himself in public. In this way it is possible that some of the things he is reported to have said have not been as faithfully and accurately reproduced as if preserved in his own handwriting. When I was in Springfield and began my inquiry into Lincoln's history as a lawyer, I was impressed by this fact, and therefore in my quest of information was never satisfied till I had reached original sources. To that end, through the good offices of Mr. Herndon and others equally indulgent and trustworthy,

I was granted access to and permitted to copy certain of the very briefs which Mr. Lincoln deemed of sufficient interest and importance to preserve in his own penmanship. Although limited in number they are characteristic specimens of his method of reasoning and style of expression as well as unquestioned evidence of his actual utterance. In presenting them thus publicly I presume I should beg the indulgence of such persons as may question their propriety, for some of them may touch upon delicate and suggestive topics. We should remember they are a part of Lincoln and should, for that reason, be preserved. It is possible they may not please or attract every reader, but they cannot fail of their effect on the lawyers of the land and that vast army of other people who will not be content till they see Lincoln "just as he was."

Without further explanation or apology I venture to quote from Lincoln's brief in the case of Patterson *vs.* Edwards appealed to the Supreme Court of Illinois. It was a suit between two women in which one charged the other was the mother of a negro child. The court having ruled against his client Lincoln petitioned for a rehearing. Following is a portion of his argument copied from the original draft in Lincoln's handwriting which lies before me as I write:

In the Supreme Court of the State of Illinois, December term A.D. 1845. Patterson & wife vs. Edwards & wife. Error to Mason.

And now we, the defendants in error, present this, our petition, for a rehearing in this cause. This court reversed the judgment of the court below;

First: Because the court below denied the motion for a new trial — and

Secondly; Because the court below denied the motion in

arrest of judgment. To entitle ourselves to a rehearing, it is incumbent on us to make it appear *probable*, at least, that the court below decided correctly on *both* of these points.

And first as to the question of new trial. In reversing the judgment on this point, the court seem to proceed on the supposition that the words *alleged* and the words *proved* are not the same — that there is a *material* variance. That there is a literal variance is certain; but is it a *material* one? The words alleged are: "Mrs. Edwards has raised a family of children by a negro, and I can prove it." If we change the language from the second person, past tense, as detailed by the witnesses, to the first person, present tense, as spoken by Mrs. Patterson, the words proved by Mrs. Seymour, to have been spoken by Mrs. Patterson are: "I did tell Julius Scoville that Mrs. Edwards has had children by a negro, and it is true"; and those proved by Mrs. Edwards are, "Your mother has had children by a negro, and all her children are negroes."

Now in what particular, this court regards these words as *proved* materially variant from those *alleged* the opinion does not state: but merely states the undeniable doctrine that it is not sufficient to prove *equivalent* words. What in the sense of the law are *equivalent* words? We understand *equivalent* words to be the words amounting to something very near the charge and quite as bad as the charge alleged; while we understand words amounting to the *identical* charge alleged, as being, in the sense of the law, not *merely equivalent* words but *the* words alleged, notwithstanding a slight literal or verbal variance — we insist that a variance to be material in law, must be a variance in *sense*. If we are right in this, we ask 'Is there any difference *in sense* between saying a woman has *raised* children by a negro, and saying she *had* children by a negro?

On the question of variance we refer the court to

1 Starkie on Slander side pages 369 to 383 inclusive & notes.

Also 2 Cowen 479–83.

But if there is a material variance, and the evidence was therefore improper to be received under the issue, still, could the party opposed, permit it to go to the jury, without objection, let us rest without supposing it necessary to introduce other evidence, take the chance of a verdict and after losing make the objection for the first time by motion for a new trial? Let it be

borne in mind that the objection is not to *proper* evidence *insufficient in amount* but to *improper* evidence.

On this point we refer to 1 Bibb 248, 4 Wendell 277–283.

But if the variance is *material* and the objection might properly be taken for the first time, by a motion for a new trial, ought the court below to have allowed the motion without our attention and the court's attention being particularly drawn to the point by *reasons in writing*, according to the statute? We insist that by our statute, upon principle and upon analogous decisions, a court ought not to allow a new trial, unless the ground on which it is sought, be specifically pointed out. On page 491, Sec. 20 of an old revised code is the following, to wit: "And if either party may wish to except to the verdict, or for other causes to move for a new trial, or in arrest of judgment, he shall, before final judgment be entered, give, by himself or counsel to the opposite party, or his counsel, the points in writing, particularly specifying the grounds of such motion and shall also furnish the judge with a copy of the same, etc."

Upon principle we say, that it is unfair to the court below, to reverse his judgment upon a point never presented to the judge's consideration; that it is unfair to us to do here, at our delay, trouble and expense what might have been done in the court below, upon the ground being fairly shown; and further, that it is probable the variances, such as it appears in the Bill of Exceptions, did not really exist; but that it got into the Bill only by the carelessness of the court below and of us; no such point being supposed to be involved. It is hardly necessary to add that no such reasons in writing, as we hold to be necessary appear by the record. For decisions bearing on this point we refer to 1 Bibb 142, 1 Scam. 233, 4 Wendell 484–9. In this last case the court say: "If counsel will not discriminate in their objections, so as to draw the attention of the court to what is conceived to be objectionable in the decision made, they are precluded from urging it as a cause for reversing the judgment."

On the question of arrest of judgment this court declared that the words "Mrs. Edwards has raised a family of children by a negro" do not, "in their plain and popular sense, or in common acceptation, *necessarily* amount to charge of adultery." Wherein these words vary from, or fall short of such a charge, the opinion does not state. Whether the court believe that these

words do not mean, that Mrs. Edwards had raised a family of children, of whom she was the *mother*, and a negro was the *father;* or whether, admitting this, the court believe she may have been the wife of the negro, and therefore, may have borne children by him without adultery, the opinion shows nothing from which we can judge. Until the decision of this court, we had never supposed there could be a rational doubt that these words would be construed by all who might hear them, as the declaration construes them. We have thought, and still do think, that if twelve plain men should enter this room and each, out of the hearing of the others should be told these words, not one of them would fail to attach to them the very meaning that the declaration attaches to them. But we may be mistaken; and we now proceed to treat them as being of more doubtful import than we had thought. The opinion says the words "do not *necessarily* amount to a charge of adultery etc." We say, as matter of law, that to sustain the judgment of the court below, they *need* not *necessarily* to amount to such a charge. We say they need only be *capable* of the meaning attached to them by the declaration; even though the contrary meaning were more probably the true one. In this, we do not speak without the books. We will furnish the court, if they desire, with a new edition, in two volumes, of Starkie on Slander, and refer to Volume 1 — side pages 44 to 51 inclusive. The construction of words of doubtful meaning is there fully discussed. It is there shown that there *was* an *old*, and *is a new* rule on the subject; that the old rule was to construe words in *mitiori sensu*, or, in the most favourable sense for the defendant, which they were capable of bearing, never allowing a plaintiff to have a judgment, unless the words *necessarily* amounted to the charge he alleged in his declaration; that this old rule has been exploded nearly or quite a hundred years; and a new rule fully established. A train of decisions under each rule is given; and on side pages 59 & 60 the author sums up in these words.

From these cases containing the opinion of some of the most enlightened judges of their own, or any other times, it may be collected; 1st That when words are capable of *two constructions* in what sense they were meant, is a matter of fact to be *decided by the jury*. 2nd That they (the jury) are to be guided, in forming their opinion by the impression which the words or signs

used were calculated to make on the minds of those who heard or saw them, as collected from the whole of the circumstances.

3rd That such words or signs will, after verdict for the plaintiff be considered by the court to have been used in their worst sense. See notes also. Also see 2 Cowen 479 to 82 where the court say — "But aside from the difficulty as to the remedy, it is a sufficient answer to this application that the words proved would admit of some doubt as to their meaning, and where there is room for the least criticism upon their import, it is properly a question for the jury, whose decision is conclusive." For these reasons your petitioners pray for a rehearing of said cause.

LINCOLN p. q.

The brief of another argument by Lincoln is worthy of our attention, because, when we read his observations and moral reflections outlined therein, we are no longer at a loss to determine what he thought of gambling, and more particularly his attitude regarding the sinfulness, if any, of betting on elections. His deductions in the suit of Smith *vs.* Smith, which was appealed to the Supreme Court of Illinois from Bond County, are both pertinent and suggestive. After relating that in November, 1856, two days after the presidential election, Isaac Smith, the plaintiff in error, made a bet of one hundred and ten dollars with one Moffett, against a buggy owned by the latter, that the vote of Fillmore as a candidate for President of the United States was not behind the other candidates in the State of New York, he continues:

The defendant attempts to defend his wrong by proving a bet on the Presidential election in this wise: He says he bet some money with Moffett against the buggy of Moffett on the *Presidential Election in the State of New York;* that the money and buggy were put into the hands of a stake-holder; and that the stake-holder about the 14th day of November, 1856, decided

the bet in the favor of the defendant below. The defendant took the buggy away from the place where the plaintiff left it at the time of the trade. See Record — page 9. The trade between Moffett and plaintiff below was for the buggy in controversy. Now it appears that Moffett's and the plaintiff's trade about and for the buggy and note was before the bet. *This does not appear* from absolute figures, but it is necessarily so, as the witnesses in spirit state it. But suppose this is not so, yet *it is positively true* that the plaintiff below and Moffett traded as aforesaid long before the stake-holder had decided the question and long before the defendant below took possession of the buggy.

And now this question is presented: Is this gambling debt contrary to the laws of this state, or public policy, or morality; and this being the case, as we think it is, the seller of the buggy had a right to *repent of the law's violation* and to *revoke the bet;* and the power conferred on the stake-holder so long as the Presidential question in the State of N. Y. was an open and undecided question by the stake-holder.

1st — This is gambling and comes within the provisions of our statute against gambling. See Rev. Statute pages 177–263; 2 Carter (Indiana) 499 and 2 Vol. Freeman's Digest 1570–71. We think that betting on Presidential elections over the Union, or in *particular states thereof*, comes within the spirit of the laws; and if not such betting is contrary to public policy and morality and therefore void, or, at least, voidable; i.e. that bets may be *revoked while the decision is pending.*

2nd. — And now for the revocation argument: A bet may be revoked because it is contrary to the law of this state or its *public policy or public morality.* See 9 Barlow 315; 18 Penn 329; 12 B. Monroe 140–141; 11 Cushing 357. This bet was revoked by the sale to the plaintiff below, long before the decision of the question by the stake-holder, *and this repenting and revoking the law allows — yea favors.*

Following this comes a long list of authorities including various court decisions relied upon by Mr. Lincoln unnecessary to enumerate here. The remaining item that merits our attention is the closing paragraph of the brief. It is in the form of a moral essay, but is in the handwrit-

ing of Herndon who also signs the firm's name to the document. Whether it expresses Lincoln's real ideas, or those of Herndon, or both, does not appear; but viewed at this distance we cannot deny that it has the right ring. It reads as follows:

> This Union is a brotherhood of states and it is said that if it is to fall it will be caused by fraud, force and wrong upon the ballot-box. Once make Missouri, Kentucky and Indiana interested by bets in Illinois elections, though for President, and you hold out inducements to raids, ruffianism, etc. The same with reference to elections in Indiana, Kentucky and Missouri and the people of Illinois will overrun those states. Build up good communities; do as you would be done by and all is safe and right. Let the court put its face against betting on all elections in this Union; but upon totally foreign countries leave it as at common law though barbarous. The complicated relations of these 32 states to each other and the Union create a peculiar public policy. Read 3 Scammon again and reverse or modify it.
>
> Respectfully
> LINCOLN & HERNDON

Notwithstanding the varied and interesting incidents of Lincoln's life which I have gathered and tried to preserve, I cannot but feel that any delineation of his character as a lawyer will be incomplete if it does not throw the required light on his qualification and equipment as an advocate — if it fails to indicate how he appeared and what he said when he looked into their faces and sought to convince the twelve men who confronted him from the jury box. Thus far I have been content to quote from the briefs of arguments carefully written out by him before they were read to learned and dignified judges; but now I beg the indulgence of the reader if I venture to present, as accurately as human agency can reproduce it,

his language when he addressed the jury in the famous Rock Island Bridge case, tried in the United States Circuit Court in Chicago in September, 1857, Judge John McLean, of the Supreme Court, presiding. In order to keep within proper bounds it will be necessary to abridge Lincoln's speech somewhat, but even then I fear I shall make serious inroads on the reader's patience.

As the suit was, in reality, one of the most memorable Lincoln ever tried, a few words of explanation are essential. The action was entitled Hurd *vs.* Rock Island Bridge Company, and grew out of the opposition by the steamboat people interested in the navigation of the Mississippi River to the construction of a bridge across that stream. The bridge between Rock Island and Davenport was built and in use only a short time when the steamboat Effie Afton passing up, proceeded some two hundred feet above the head of the long draw pier when one of her wheels stopped, and the other being continued, the boat turned around against the tendency of the current and brought up against the bridge at the pier next east of the draw pier. A stove was overturned by the shock, burning the boat, and the span against which it struck. The result was a suit by the steamboat people against the owners of the bridge, which included the railroad company, for damages, on the ground that the bridge was an obstruction to navigation. The counsel for the plaintiff included H. M. Wead, of Peoria, Illinois, and T. D. Lincoln, of Cincinnati, Ohio, a prominent admiralty lawyer familiarly known as "Tim" Lincoln, and Corydon Beckwith, of Chicago, afterwards a member of the Supreme Court of Illinois. The counsel for the defendant consisted of Nor-

man B. Judd, of Chicago, Joseph Knox, of Rock Island, and Abraham Lincoln, of Springfield.

"The case was of absorbing interest to the river towns," says John T. Richards, formerly President of the Chicago Bar Association, "as well as to those centers of population whose future prosperity was dependent upon the development of railroad transportation. The people of the country were divided in accordance with local self-interest. The people of St. Louis, Cincinnati, and other towns similarly situated believed that if the railroad companies were permitted to build bridges across the navigable rivers of the country they would lose the commercial advantages which they enjoyed from traffic upon the Mississippi and Ohio Rivers; and the owners of the steamboats, who for many years had enjoyed a monopoly of the transportation of freight from points west of the Mississippi, foresaw that if the railroads were to be allowed to transport freight from the vast territory west of that great artery of commerce across that river and through to the eastern seaboard without the expense of reloading on the banks of the streams over which it must pass to reach its destination, that monopoly would be destroyed. Hence the interests referred to combined in the case against the bridge company for the purpose of preventing the building of other bridges which would interfere with river traffic."

The newspapers of Chicago, Cincinnati, and St. Louis gave unusual publicity to the "Effie Afton Case," the name by which the suit was popularly known. "Some idea of the bitterness of the contest," writes Frederick Trevor Hill, "may be gathered from the fact that the railroad charged the steamboat captain with being bribed to run

his vessel against the bridge and thus make a case of obstructed navigation. This accusation was, of course, angrily denied; but when the bridge was accidentally burned all the river craft gathered at the spot and let their whistles loose in sheer joy at the disaster. Under these circumstances it required a cool head and an even temper to carry the day, and Lincoln was to equal the occasion."

For such portions of Lincoln's argument on this occasion as are here quoted credit is due Robert R. Hitt, the shorthand reporter representing the "Chicago Press and Tribune," who was present, heard Lincoln and took down his speech. Mr. Hitt assured the writer and Mr. Horace White, for many years editor of the "Tribune," that he reported it for the paper with unusual fidelity and that when he had elaborated his notes he was sure his version of the speech was as nearly word for word the language of Lincoln as he knew how to preserve and record it. As it is probably the only published utterance of Lincoln prior to 1860, with the exception of his debate with Douglas, his lecture on "Discovery and Invention" in 1859, and the Cooper Institute address, which approaches the literal reproduction of his spoken words, it cannot fail to interest the man who never saw Lincoln and who is, therefore, all the more anxious to learn how the latter expressed himself when he undertook to convince a jury of his peers. As already indicated the limitations of space forbid the insertion of the entire speech, but certain portions are so edifying and characteristic they cannot well be omitted.

After the usual recognition of the judge and jury, Lincoln began:

It is foreign to my purpose to pursue or assail anybody, and although I may seem to grow earnest I shall try not to be offensive or ill-natured. There is some conflict of testimony in this case, but one quarter of such a number of witnesses seldom agree, and even if all were on one side some discrepancy might still be expected. We are to try to reconcile them and to believe that they are not intentionally erroneous as long as we can.

Following this Lincoln called to mind the opposition to the bridge which developed at St. Louis because that place felt that it was adverse to her commerce and would divert a portion of it from the river.

It would not be pleasing to me, [he continued,] to have one of these great channels extending from where it never freezes to where it never thaws blocked up; but there is a travel from east to west whose demands are not less important than those of the river. It is growing larger and larger, building up new countries with a rapidity never before seen in the history of the world. This current of travel has its rights as well as that north and south. If the river had not the advantage in priority and legislation we could enter into free competition with it and we could surpass it. This particular railroad line has a great importance and the statement of its business during a little less than a year shows this importance. It is in evidence that from September 8, 1856, to August 8, 1857, 12,586 freight cars and 74,179 passengers passed over this bridge. Navigation was closed four days short of four months last year, and during this time while the river was of no use this road and bridge were valuable. There is, too, a considerable portion of the time when floating or thin ice makes the river useless while the bridge is as useful as ever. This shows that this bridge must be treated with respect in this court and is not to be kicked about with contempt. The other day Judge Wead alluded to the strife of the contending interests and even a dissolution of the Union; but the proper mode for all parties in this affair is to "live and let live" and then we will find a cessation of the trouble about the bridge.

And now I ask what mood were the steamboat men in when this bridge was burned? Why, there was a shouting and ringing

of bells and whistling on all the boats as it fell. It was a jubilee, a greater celebration than follows an exciting election.

After describing the difficulty of navigation following the burning of the bridge, alluding to the "tapering off" of the dangers, and predicting that as the boatmen "get cool the ratio of accidents will decrease," Lincoln proceeds to pay his respects to the opposing counsel as follows:

Judge Wead said while admitting that the floats went straight through there was a difference between a float and a boat, but I do not remember that he indulged us with an argument in support of this statement. Is it because there is a difference in size? Will not a small body and a large one float the same way under the same influence? True a flatboat will float faster than an eggshell might be blown away by the wind, but if under the *same influence* they would go the same way. Logs, floats, boards, various things, the witnesses say, all show the same current. Then is not this test reliable? At all depths, too, the direction of the current is the same. A series of these floats would make a line as long as a boat and would show any influence upon any part and all parts of the boat.

At this point in his argument Lincoln evidently fell back on his knowledge and the experience he gained when he floated down the Mississippi on a flatboat to New Orleans with John Hanks a quarter of a century before.

I will now speak of the angular position of the piers. What is the amount of the angle? The course of the river is a curve and the pier is straight. If a line is produced from the upper end of the long pier straight with the pier to a distance of three hundred and fifty feet and a line is drawn from a point in the channel opposite this point to the head of the pier, Colonel Nason says they will form an angle of twenty degrees. But the angle if measured at the pier is seven degrees; that is, we would have to move the pier seven degrees to make it exactly straight with the current. Would that make the navigation better or worse? The witnesses of the plaintiff seem to think it was only neces-

sary to say that the pier formed an angle with the current and that settled the matter. Our more careful and accurate witnesses say that though they had been accustomed to seeing the piers placed straight with the current, yet they could see that here the current had been made straight by us in having made this slight angle; that the water now runs just right; that it is straight and cannot be improved. They think that if the pier was changed the eddy would be divided and the navigation improved.

I am not now going to discuss the question of what is a material obstruction. We do not greatly differ about the law. The cases produced here are, I suppose, proper to be taken into consideration by the court in instructing a jury. Some of them I think are not exactly in point, but I am still willing to trust His Honor, Judge McLean, and take his instructions as law. What is reasonable skill and care? This is a thing of which the jury are to judge. I differ from the other side when it says that they are bound to exercise no more care than was taken before the building of the bridge. If we are allowed by the legislature to build the bridge which will require them to do more than before, when a pilot comes along it is unreasonable for him to dash on heedless of this structure which has been *legally put there.* The Afton came there on the 5th and lay at Rock Island until next morning. When a boat lies up the pilot has a holiday, and would not any of these jurors have then gone around to the bridge and gotten acquainted with the place. Pilot Parker has shown here that he does not understand the draw. I heard him say that the fall from the head to the foot of the pier was four feet. He needs information; he could have gone there that day and seen there was no such fall. He should have discarded passion and the chances are that he would have had no disaster at all. He was bound to make himself acquainted with the place.

McCammon says that the current and the swell coming from the long pier drove her against the long pier; in other words, drove her toward the very pier from which the current came! It is an absurdity — an impossibility. The only explanation I can find for this contradiction is in a current which White says strikes out from the long pier and then like a ram's horn turns back, and this might have acted somehow in this manner.

It is agreed by all that the plaintiff's boat was destroyed and

that it was destroyed upon the head of the short pier; that she moved from the channel where she was with her bow above the head of the long pier till she struck the short one, swung around under the bridge, and there was crowded and destroyed.

I shall try to prove that the average velocity of the current through the draw with the boat in it should be five and a half miles an hour; that it is slowest at the head of the pier and swiftest at the foot of the pier. Their lowest estimate in evidence is six miles an hour; their highest twelve miles. This was the testimony of men who made no experiment, only conjecture. We have adopted the most exact means. The water runs swiftest in high water and we have taken the point of nine feet above low water. The water when the Afton was lost was seven feet above low water, or at least a foot lower than our time. Brayton and his assistant timed the instruments, the best instruments known in measuring currents. They timed them under various circumstances and they found the current five miles an hour and no more. They found that the water at the upper end ran slower than five miles; that below it was swifter than five miles; but that the average was five miles. Shall men who have taken no care, who conjecture, some of whom speak of twenty miles an hour, be believed against those who have had such a favorable and well-improved opportunity? They would not even *qualify* the result. Several men have given their opinion as to the distance of the steamboat Carson and I suppose if *one* should go and *measure* that distance you would believe him in preference to all of them.

These measurements were made when the boat was not in the draw. It has been ascertained what is the area of the cross-section of this stream and the area of the face of the piers and the engineers say that the piers being put there will increase the current proportionately as the space is decreased. So with the boat in the draw. The depth of the channel was twenty-two feet, the width one hundred and sixteen feet; multiply these and you have the square feet across the water of the draw, viz.: 2552 feet. The Afton was thirty-five feet wide and drew five feet, making a fourteenth of the sum. Now, one fourteenth of five miles is five fourteenths of one mile — about one third of a mile — the increase of the current. We will call the current five and a half miles per hour. The next thing I will try to prove is that the

plaintiff's boat had power to run six miles an hour in that current. It has been testified that she was a strong, swift boat able to run eight miles an hour upstream in a current of four miles an hour and fifteen miles downstream. Strike the average and you will find what is her average — about eleven and a half miles. Take the five and a half miles which is the speed of the current in the draw and it leaves the power of that boat in that draw at six miles an hour, 528 feet per minute, and 8 4/5 feet to the second.

Next I propose to show that there are no cross-currents. I know their witnesses say that there are cross-currents; that, as one witness says, there were three cross-currents and two eddies; so far as mere statement without experiment and mingled with mistakes can go they have proved. But can these men's testimony be compared with the nice, exact, and thorough experiments of our witnesses. Can you believe that these floats go across the currents? It is inconceivable that they could not have discovered every possible current. How do boats find currents that floats cannot discover? We assume the position, then, that those cross-currents are not there. My next proposition is that the Afton passed between the S. B. Carson and the Iowa shore. That is undisputed.

Next I shall show that she struck first the short pier, then the long pier, then the short one again, and there she stopped. How did the boat strike when she went in? Here is an endless variety of opinion — the testimony of eighteen witnesses. But ten of them say what pier she struck; three of them testify that she struck first the short, then the long, and the short for the last time. None of the rest substantially contradict this. I assume that these men have got the truth because I believe it an established fact. My next proposition is that after she struck the short and long pier and before she got back to the short pier, the boat got right with her bow up. So says the pilot Parker: "that he got her through until her starboard wheel passed the short pier." This would make her head about even with the head of the long pier. He says her head was as high or higher than the head of the long pier. Other witnesses confirmed this one. The final stroke was in the splash door aft the wheel. Witnesses differ but the majority say that she struck thus.

At this point the court adjourned, and on the following day, shown by the record to be Wednesday, September 23, 1857, Lincoln resumed his argument assuring the court that he would conclude as soon as possible. From the model of a boat he explained where the splash door is just behind the wheel, adding that the current as represented would drive an ascending boat to the long pier, but not to the short pier as the other side had contended. Continuing his argument he said:

The boat struck on the lower shoulder of the short pier, as she swung around, in the splash door; then as she went on around she struck the point or end of the pier where she rested. Her engineers say the starboard then was rushing around rapidly. Then the boat must have struck the upper point of the pier so far back as not to disturb the wheel. It is forty feet from the stern of the Afton to the splash door and thus it appears that she had but forty feet to go to clear the pier. How was it that the Afton with all her power flanked over from the channel to the short pier without moving one foot ahead? Suppose she was in the middle of the draw, her wheel would have been thirty-one feet from the short pier. The reason she went over thus is her starboard wheel was not working. I shall try to establish the fact that the wheel was not running and that after she struck she went ahead on this same wheel. Upon the last point the witnesses agree that the starboard wheel was running after she struck and no witnesses say that it was running while she was out in the draw flanking over.

Other witnesses show that the captain said something of the machinery of the wheel and the inference is that he knew the wheel was not working. The pilot says he ordered the engineers to back her up. The engineers differ from him and said they kept on going ahead. The bow was so swung that the current pressed it over; the pilot pressed the stern over with the rudder, though not so fast but that the bow gained on it, and only one wheel being in motion, the boat nearly stood still, so far as motion up and down is concerned and thus she was thrown upon this pier.

The Afton came into the draw after she had just passed the Carson, and as the Carson no doubt kept the true course the Afton, going around her, got out of the proper way, got across the current into the eddy, which is west of a straight line drawn down from the long pier, and was compelled to resort to these changes of wheel which she did not do with sufficient adroitness to save her. Was it not her own fault that she entered wrong, so far wrong that she never got right? Is the defense to blame for that?

At this point Lincoln unbent slightly and indulged in a brief witticism, a thing he rarely attempted in public save occasionally in a talk to a country jury.

For several days we were entertained with depositions about boats "smelling a bar." Why, then, did the Afton after she had come up smelling so close to the long pier sheer off so strangely? When she had got to the center of the very nose she was smelling, she seemed suddenly to have lost her sense of smell and to have flanked over to the short pier.

It is suggested as a way out of the difficulty that a tunnel be built under the river; but that is not practicable, for there is not a tunnel that is a successful project in this world. A suspension bridge cannot be built so high but that the chimneys of the boats will grow up till they cannot pass. The steamboat men will take pains to make them grow. The cars of a railroad cannot without immense expense rise high enough to get even with a suspension bridge or go low enough to get through a tunnel; such expense is unreasonable.

The plaintiffs have to establish that the bridge is a material obstruction and that they have managed their boat with reasonable care and skill. As to the last point high winds have nothing to do with it, for it was not a windy day. They must show due skill and care. Difficulties going downstream will not do; for they were going upstream. Difficulties with barges in tow have nothing to do with the accidents, for they had no barge.

Here Lincoln paused, but whether due to a suggestion or intimation from the court we do not know. At any rate, fixing his eyes on the jury he said:

Gentlemen, I have not exhausted my stock of information and there are more things I could suggest regarding this case, but as I have doubtless used up my time, I presume I had better close.

In due time Judge McLean delivered his charge to the jury and they retired. At eight o'clock they returned with the report that they were unable to agree. The court, believing that even if given more time they would never agree, dismissed them. They stood: three for the boat and nine for Lincoln's clients, the bridge people.

In September, two years before this, the noted McCormick *vs.* Manny patent infringement was tried before Judge McLean in the United States Circuit Court in Cincinnati. Lincoln was present having been retained by the defendant Manny. It will be recalled that owing to the determination of his associates, Edwin M. Stanton and George Harding, of Philadelphia, to make the two speeches allowed the defense, he was successfully ignored. He remained in Cincinnati throughout the trial, but took little part in the proceedings. When he returned home he told the Springfield lawyers, Herndon among the number, that McLean, although of decided mental vigor, was, nevertheless, a man of limited perception. "If you pointed your forefinger and a darning needle at him at the same time," said Lincoln, "he never could make up his mind which was the sharper."

CHAPTER XIV

Life on the circuit — The Eighth Circuit described — Lincoln only lawyer who traveled over all of it — His horse and buggy — The landlord's welcome — Life at the tavern — Lincoln's dress — Leonard Swett's introduction to Lincoln and Davis — Lincoln's methods described by Henry C. Whitney — Joins Leonard Swett in defense of a murderer — His record in fugitive slave cases — Explanation by John W. Bunn of his few appearances in court in behalf of runaway slaves — Account by J. Birch of Lincoln lounging in the county clerk's office — Also his physical appearance and habits in political campaigns — The Wright case — Befriending the Matheney heirs — Forcing the foreign impostor to disgorge his gains — Fee paid by Jacob Bunn and how Lincoln applied it.

MR. LINCOLN always divided his life as a lawyer into two periods or epochs; one preceding and the other following his single term in Congress. His legal career, therefore, dates from the spring of 1849, when, believing himself politically dead, he returned to the law and began the struggle in dead earnest again. His business was largely confined to the circuit, a mode of practice almost unknown to the present generation of lawyers. The now historic Eighth Circuit over which he traveled included fourteen counties in central Illinois, comprising eleven thousand square miles or almost one fifth of the area of the State.

"For many years," relates a survivor of the circuit days, "there were no railroads and but few bridges over the streams. Courts were held in the various counties twice a year lasting from three days to a week. After court adjourned in one county, the judge rode to the next county seat and was followed by the State's attorney, whose authority extended over the whole circuit, and by some of the lawyers to a few of the counties near their homes." Mr. Lincoln was the only lawyer who rode the entire circuit,

visiting practically all the courts, which lasted about three months in the spring and three in the fall. When the courts opened in Christian, Menard, and Logan Counties, which adjoined Sangamon, where Lincoln lived, Herndon, his partner, sometimes accompanied him, but to points beyond he usually drove alone or, occasionally, with the judge. While Herndon spent the greater part of the time in Springfield in charge of the firm's local practice and to keep track of matters in the Supreme Court, Lincoln was out on the circuit beating the bushes for more business.

"Most of the lawyers," related George P. Davis, the son of Judge David Davis, "rode horseback; but after a few years my father, who was the circuit judge, and Mr. Lincoln were able to afford a buggy. My father, who was a very heavy man, used two horses. Mr. Lincoln had a one-horse open buggy and drove his own steed, 'Old Buck,' as I remember his name. In the fall of 1850 my mother went around the circuit with my father and Mr. Lincoln took me in his buggy. I have a distinct recollection of the horse, the buggy, and Mr. Lincoln, although I cannot now relate much of what he said on the trip."

Following the court around on the circuit was, no doubt, one of the greatest pleasures Lincoln enjoyed; in fact, it is now known that he declined an offer to enter a promising if not lucrative law partnership in Chicago after the debates with Douglas because, as he contended, it would confine him to the office and thus keep him off the circuit. Seated in his one-horse buggy behind a sorry-looking animal he would set out from Springfield to be gone for weeks at a stretch. The lawyers, as he drove into each successive town, eagerly anticipating a new stock of stories, were anxious

to greet him, and the landlords, so we are told, hailed his coming with delight. He was one of those gentle, uncomplaining beings whom the servants at the inns generally put off with the most indifferent accommodations. He said once he never so completely felt his own insignificance as when he stood face to face with a real, live city hotel clerk.

"He was never," said one of his colleagues, "seated next to the landlord at a crowded table and never got a chicken liver or the best cut from the roast. He never complained of the food, bed, or lodging. If every other fellow grumbled at the bill of fare which greeted us at many of the dingy taverns where we sojourned, Lincoln said nothing; yet he loved the life and never went home without reluctance."

When the court moved from one county to another there was great bustle and activity at each successive place. Men came together when court-time rolled around to meet the celebrities at the bar, to buy supplies, to negotiate loans, to sell live stock, to hear the lawyers "plead," and, in fact, for almost every imaginable purpose. The best room at the tavern was reserved for the judge and such choice spirits among the lawyers as he might draw about him. The other lawyers slept two in a bed, and two or more beds were frequently crowded into one room. At meals the judge, lawyers, jurors, suitors, witnesses, court-officers, and prisoners out on bail ate together at a long dining-table. "I well remember," relates one of this promiscuous company, the late Henry C. Whitney, of Champaign, Illinois, "a term of court at one place where a prisoner on trial for perjury used to spend the evenings with us in Judge Davis's room, and another place where the prisoner, then on trial for larceny,

not only spent his evenings in our room, but took walks with us and ate in our immediate company."

In this crude and nomadic life Lincoln spent almost half of each year. Without the conveniences of the modern lawyer, stenographer, typewriter, without books even, he moved from court to court, his papers in his hat or coat-pocket, his business in his head. The consideration and trial of each case began and ended with itself, and each successive county brought new business and new clients.

In the matter of dress, when on the circuit and away from home, Lincoln, though properly clad, was far from fastidious. His personal habits were of the simplest character. Henry C. Whitney, who was with him in the latter half of the fifties hardly less than David Davis, Leonard Swett, and Herndon, thus describes him: "His hat was brown and faded and the nap invariably worn or rubbed off. He wore a short cloak and sometimes a shawl. His coat and vest hung loosely on his giant frame and his trousers were usually a trifle short. In one hand he carried a faded green umbrella with his name, A. LINCOLN, in rather large white cotton or muslin letters sewed on the inside. The knob was gone from the handle and, when closed, a piece of cord was usually tied round it in the middle to keep it from flying open. In the other hand he carried a literal carpet-bag in which were stored the few papers to be used in court, and underclothing enough to last till his return to Springfield."

He is thus described by the son of David Davis: "He was careless about dress, though he was always clean. I thought his clothes were too short for him, especially his coat. For a necktie he wore an old-fashioned stiff stock which encircled his neck. When he became interested in

his speech he would frequently take it off, unbutton his shirt, and give room for his Adam's apple to play up and down. He had a high-pitched voice, but it could be heard a great distance, every word of a sentence being equally clear. He was frequently at my father's house, and in 1858, the year of the debates with Douglas, spent a long season with us. On one of his visits I had a new autograph album in which he wrote as follows: 'My young friend George Perrin Davis has allowed me the honor of being the first to write his name in this book. A. Lincoln. Bloomington Ills. Dec. 21 1858.'"

I cannot pass from this phase of Lincoln's development without putting on canvas a copy of his portrait drawn for me several years ago by one who also traveled the circuit with him and who in every way was closely allied to him. I refer to Leonard Swett. "I shall never forget," Mr. Swett once told me, "the first time I saw Mr. Lincoln. I had expected to encounter him at Springfield, but he was absent from home, nor did our meeting occur till later. It was at the town of Danville. When I called at the hotel it was after dark, and I was told that he was upstairs in Judge Davis's room. In the region where I had been brought up, the judge of the court was usually a man of more or less gravity so that he could not be approached save with some degree of deference. I was not a little abashed, therefore, after I had climbed the unbanistered stairway, to find myself so near the presence and dignity of Judge Davis in whose room I was told I could find Mr. Lincoln. In response to my timid knock two voices responded almost simultaneously, 'Come in.' Imagine my surprise when the door opened to find two men undressed, or rather dressed



LEONARD SWETT
August 23, 1887



HENRY C. WHITNEY
October 7, 1887

for bed, engaged in a lively battle with pillows, tossing them at each other's heads. One, a low, heavy-set man who leaned against the foot of the bed and puffed like a lizard, answered to the description of Judge Davis. The other was a man of tremendous stature; compared to Davis he looked as if he were eight feet tall. He was encased in a long, indescribable garment, yellow as saffron, which reached to his heels, and from beneath which protruded two of the largest feet I had, up to that time, been in the habit of seeing. This immense shirt, for shirt it must have been, looked as if it had been literally carved out of the original bolt of flannel of which it was made and the pieces joined together without reference to measurement or capacity. The only thing that kept it from slipping off the tall and angular frame it covered was the single button at the throat; and I confess to a succession of shudders when I thought of what might happen should that button by any mischance lose its hold. I cannot describe my sensations as this apparition, with the modest announcement, 'My name is Lincoln,' strode across the room to shake my trembling hand. I will not say he reminded me of Satan, but he was certainly the ungodliest figure I had ever seen."

I attach much importance to the recollection and testimony of Henry C. Whitney, who, in the decade prior to the Civil War, practiced law in Champaign County, Illinois, where he was both intimately acquainted, and, from a professional standpoint, frequently associated, with Lincoln. After Lincoln became President, Mr. Whitney removed to Chicago, where, in the eighties, I spent a good deal of time with him. It was from and through him that I gathered a fund of material regarding Lincoln's life as a

circuit-court lawyer which has proved to be of decided historic value. He was a close friend of Herndon, maintaining that the latter was as useful as he was true to Lincoln, and insisting that, notwithstanding his weaknesses, Lincoln's faith in him remained unshaken to the last. The greater part of what Mr. Whitney communicated to me he put in writing, all of which I have carefully retained.

Among other things I remember he contended that the estimate of Lincoln by some writers who seek to prove that, as a lawyer, he was in the habit of surrendering his fee and retiring from every case in which there was any doubt of his success, was a great popular misconception. "Mr. Lincoln would advise with perfect frankness about a potential case," he once said, "but when it was *in esse*, then he wanted to win as badly as any lawyer; but unlike lawyers of a certain type he would not do anything mean, or which savored of sharp practice, or which required absolute sophistry or chicanery in order to succeed. In a clear case of dishonesty he would hedge in some way so as not himself to partake of the dishonesty. In a doubtful case of dishonesty, he would give his client the benefit of the doubt, and in an ordinary case he would try the case so far as he could like any other lawyer except that he absolutely abjured technicality and went for justice and victory denuded of every integument.

"As attorney for the Illinois Central Railroad I had authority to employ additional counsel whenever I chose to do so, and in Judge Davis's circuit I frequently applied to Lincoln when I needed aid. I never found him unwilling to appear in behalf of a great 'soulless corporation.' In such cases he always stood by me, and I always, of course,

tried to win. There was nothing of the milksop about him, nor did he peer unnecessarily into a case to find some reason to act out of the usual line; but he had the same animus ordinarily as any other lawyer. I remember a murder trial in which he was joined with Leonard Swett and myself for the defense. Swett was a most effective advocate, and when he closed in the afternoon I was full of faith that our client would be acquitted. Lincoln followed the next morning, and while he made some good points the honesty of his mental processes forced him into a line of argument and admission that was very damaging. We all felt that he had hurt our case. In point of fact our client was convicted and sent to the penitentiary for three years. Lincoln, whose merciless logic drove him into the belief that the culprit was guilty of murder, had his humanity so wrought upon that he induced the Governor to pardon him after he had served one year."

Although humane and prone to right a wrong whenever possible, it cannot be said that Lincoln sought cases of injustice to remedy or went out of his way to befriend or defend the weak man from the heartlessness of his oppressor. Of course he opposed slavery, but he himself was no more aggressive in defense of the slave than others whose sentiments on that subject were less widely known. Herndon, for instance, was far more radical and venturesome. Before me lie the papers disclosing the history of three cases tried in the Springfield courts, in each of which a negro sought to obtain his freedom. In the case of Emily Logan *vs.* Marcus A. Chinn, venued from Morgan to Sangamon County in 1840, the woman sued out a writ of *homine replegiando*, seeking to recover her freedom from

Chinn who claimed her as a runaway slave from Kentucky. The case was closely contested, but the jury decided in the slave's favor, thus relieving her from further surveillance. Stephen T. Logan represented the defendant, Chinn, and Baker & Edwards the woman. Another action which was tried early in 1850 grew out of the detention, in the Springfield jail, of five negroes, three men and two women, believed to be runaway slaves. One of the men, called Hempstead Thornton, was described as a "negro supposed to be forty or fifty years old, with one leg off," and another one, "twenty-five or thirty years old, with one short leg supposed to be occasioned by the white swelling." The women were described as copper-colored. By the order of J. W. Keyes, justice of the peace, the negroes, "being runaway slaves and believed to be without free papers," were turned over to a constable to be placed in jail. The latter official Strother G. Jones, made this return on his writ:

> Executed by taking into possession the within named persons supposed to be runaway slaves, four of whom escaped from my custody on taking them before the court on the 16th inst., and the other, the oldest, a one-legged negro, was taken from my possession by the Sheriff of Sangamon County by virtue of process from the Supreme Court.

The proceeding occasioned deep interest among the people of Springfield and a decided conflict of opinion developed, but Thornton, in response to his appeal for a writ of habeas corpus, was taken before the Supreme Court, and, the facts being inquired into, he was awarded his liberty and discharged.

Another fugitive slave case was that of Edgar Canton, a negro about fifty-five years of age, who was apprehended in Springfield February 11, 1860, and arraigned before

United States Commissioner Corneau, charged with being the property of George M. Dickinson, of Shelby County, Missouri, from whom he ran away in the fall of 1856. More or less feeling arose, and although it was contended that no proof of the existence of slavery in Missouri had been offered or introduced, and the court, therefore, had no right to presume from historical knowledge that Missouri was a slave State, Commissioner Corneau held against the negro, who had a wife and two children in Springfield, and delivered him over to Dickinson to be transported to Missouri.

In no one of these fugitive slave cases did Lincoln take any part, nor did he, apparently, interest himself in other cases of like nature. As I have already intimated, it cannot be said that he upheld slavery, for we know he opposed it, but even then we should not forget that he was a lawyer and stood on high professional ground. An attempt was made to promote the cause of freedom by organizing and maintaining a colonization society in Springfield, but, judged by the local newspapers, there is nothing to indicate that Lincoln gave the movement more than passing notice. As a lawyer, it is true he did in the Bailey *vs.* Cromwell case seek to convince the court that the girl in question was not a slave, but it should also be borne in mind that in the equally noted Matson case, tried in Coles County, where a company of negroes had been imprisoned in the jail as fugitive slaves, he was still a lawyer and accepted a fee, not from the negroes seeking their freedom, but from Robert Matson, who claimed to be their owner and endeavored to return them to their Kentucky home.

Regarding Lincoln's political notions John W. Bunn

once made for my benefit this rather pertinent observation: "The reason Mr. Lincoln appeared in so few suits in behalf of runaway negroes was because of his unwillingness to be a party to a violation of the Fugitive Slave Law, arguing that the way to overcome the difficulty was to repeal the law. I have heard him make that suggestion, and I remember that in one case at least he advised that a few dollars be paid to buy off those who were holding the negro."

Elsewhere I have recorded the experience of Jonathan Birch, an old friend of mine who was licensed to practice law on an examination by Mr. Lincoln at Bloomington, Illinois, where the young man had for some time been a student in the office of his brother, one of the prominent practitioners of the place. Mr. Birch's description of Lincoln as he observed him in the court-room, the clerk's office, and other places where he held forth while out on the circuit, was to me an unusually interesting recital. Many years ago when Mr. Herndon spent a portion of one summer with me at my Indiana home, he and Mr. Birch, who was my neighbor, frequently met. I was present when they talked with each other, and I recall that what Mr. Birch, who was the embodiment of truthful and conscientious statement, said about Lincoln was verified by Herndon. Some of the things related by Birch merit repetition. Alluding to his observation and recollection of Lincoln at Bloomington and other near-by points on the circuit, he said to me once:

"Having no office of his own, Mr. Lincoln, when not engaged in court, spent a good deal of his time in the clerk's office. Very often he could be seen there surrounded by a

group of lawyers and such persons as are usually found about a court-house, some standing, others seated on chairs or tables, listening intently to one of his characteristic and inimitable stories. His eyes would sparkle with fun, and when he had reached the point in his narrative which invariably evoked the laughter of the crowd, nobody's enjoyment was greater than his. An hour later he might be seen in the same place or in some law office near by, but, alas, how different! His chair, no longer in the center of the room, would be leaning back against the wall; his feet drawn up and resting on the front rounds so that his knees and chair were about on a level; his hat tipped slightly forward as if to shield his face; his eyes no longer sparkling with fun or merriment, but sad and downcast and his hands clasped around his knees. There, drawn up within himself as it were, he would sit, the very picture of dejection and gloom. Thus absorbed have I seen him sit for hours at a time defying the interruption of even his closest friends. No one ever thought of breaking the spell by speech; for by his moody silence and abstraction he had thrown about him a barrier so dense and impenetrable no one dared to break through. It was a strange picture and one I have never forgotten.

"In his physical make-up Mr. Lincoln could not be said to be a man of prepossessing personal appearance; but his splendid head and intellectual face made up in a large measure for all his physical defects, if such they might be called. When intellectually aroused he forgot his embarrassment, his eyes kindled, and even in his manner he was irresistible. It is well known that he was more or less careless of his personal attire, and that he usually wore in his

great canvass with Douglas a linen coat, generally without any vest, a hat much the worse for wear, and carried with him a faded cotton umbrella which became almost as famous in the canvass as Lincoln himself. Late one afternoon during this canvass I boarded the train at Bloomington, soon after which Mr. Lincoln himself entered the same car in which I was seated, wearing this same linen coat and carrying the inevitable umbrella. On his arm was the cloak that he was said to have worn when he was in Congress nine years before. He greeted and talked freely with me and several other persons whom he happened to know, but as night drew on he withdrew to another part of the car where he could occupy a seat by himself. Presently he arose, spread the cloak over the seat, lay down, somehow folded himself up till his long legs and arms were no longer in view, then drew the cloak about him and went to sleep. Beyond what I have mentioned he had no baggage, no secretary, no companion even. At the same time his opponent, Judge Douglas, was traveling over the State in his private car surrounded by a retinue of followers and enjoying all the luxuries of the period.

"It was during this canvass, with every fiber of his being tremulous with emotion, I heard him, in one of his speeches denouncing the extension of slavery, passionately exclaim: 'That is the issue that will continue in this country when these poor tongues of Judge Douglas and myself shall be silent. It is the eternal struggle between these two principles — right and wrong — throughout the world. They are the two principles that have stood face to face from the beginning of time; and will ever continue to struggle. The one is the common right of humanity and the other

the divine right of kings. It is the same principle in whatever shape it develops itself. It is the same spirit that says, "You toil and work and earn bread and I'll eat it." No matter in what shape it comes, whether from the mouth of a king who seeks to bestride the people of his own nation and live by the fruit of their labor, or from one race of men as an apology for enslaving another race, it is the same tyrannical principle.' The melting pathos with which Mr. Lincoln said this and its effect on his audience cannot be described."

While it is true that Lincoln was always mindful of his prerogatives as a lawyer, and as a rule sought to conform to the ethics of the profession, it cannot be said that he was cold and inexorable — invariably deaf to the appeal of a human heart. As he reasoned he might be rigid and he should be just, but he need not be without sympathy or inhumane. This is admirably demonstrated in the Wright case, reported by Herndon, in which Lincoln espoused the cause of a widow who had been victimized by a money shark, recovered all the damages asked for, declined to charge for his services, and even offered to pay his client's board while attending court.

One incident in Lincoln & Herndon's law practice, and which was revealed to me by Herndon, brings into view so vividly Lincoln's innate honesty, admirable courage, and love of fair play, I feel I ought not to omit it. Charles Matheney, the owner of a piece of land near the limits of the city of Springfield, sold it to a woman — a client of Lincoln who lived in another part of the State. In the deed of conveyance the tract was described as a given number of acres at a fixed price per acre.

"Some years after the sale," related Herndon, "the lady wrote to Mr. Lincoln apprising him of her desire to have the land surveyed and laid off into lots. Mr. Lincoln therefore procured a compass, chains, etc., and made the required survey. When he had finished and was making his calculations, he found that Matheney, the former owner through some oversight or erroneous description had lost about three acres of land and that the woman had gained it. He at once notified his client of the discovery and advised her that in morals and equity she ought to rectify the mistake by paying to the Matheney heirs (for in the meantime Charles Matheney had died) what was justly due them according to the actual number of acres and the price per acre originally agreed upon. The woman, probably because it was a closed incident, declined to make the desired restitution. Lincoln wrote her again, reciting what, in his judgment, was both right and equitable and emphasizing the additional fact that Matheney's heirs were poor and needy. His appeals finally reached the woman's heart and she relented; for in a short time he was surprised to receive from her a generous remittance in satisfaction of the claim. With the funds thus obtained he started out in quest of the Matheney heirs and never rested till he had located them and paid to each one his proportionate share of the proceeds. I helped him divide and distribute the money, and I remember the incident well, especially his zealous and persistent efforts to awaken the woman's sense of duty if not gratitude."

An incident dealing with Lincoln's activities as a lawyer, and obtained from trustworthy and unquestioned sources, I cannot well refrain from narrating; and yet it re-

lates not so much to his professional experience as it serves to bring out the inherent and charitable forbearance that oftentimes characterized him when brought face to face with the delinquencies and shortcomings of some of his friends.

An Englishman, who posed as a nobleman or man of wealth and had purchased some land and cattle below St. Louis, succeeded in leaving there without having met all his financial obligations. He reached Springfield, where he stopped for a brief time on his way to Bloomington. Meanwhile a claim for a large sum of money followed him and was put in the hands of Jacob Bunn, the pioneer banker of Springfield, for collection. Fearful lest the stranger might press on to Bloomington without paying, Mr. Bunn induced his brother John W., his book-keeper and assistant, and Lincoln to keep an eye on him. The two sat up the better part of one night in front of the hotel where the man had lodged with directions to halt him if he should attempt to leave town. Meanwhile a rumor was current that a warrant for his arrest had followed him from the south and application for his apprehension or extradition had been made to the Governor. By this time the stranger, realizing, doubtless, that he was being closely watched, and anxious to avoid serious or embarrassing consequences, called Lincoln aside and offered to produce a thousand dollars provided the claim against him was surrendered and he was otherwise undisturbed. Lincoln conferred with Jacob Bunn, the offer was accepted, the money paid over, and the man proceeded on his journey. After he had gone, Bunn asked Lincoln about his fee, but the latter declined to make any charge, saying that he had served more as a

detective or officer than as a lawyer and adding that if at any time in the future he felt that he was entitled to a fee he would make a demand on Bunn for it.

"Thus the matter stood for a long time," related Bunn, "and had almost dropped from my recollection when early one morning, before I had eaten my breakfast, Mr. Lincoln called at my house, reminded me of the transaction, and asked me if I would pay him a hundred dollars and consider it his fee in that case. I complied promptly, assuring him I was glad to do so. Meanwhile I ventured to inquire why he had delayed asking for so long a time, and especially what had prompted him to make the demand at such an unusually early hour, reminding him that he was entitled to his money and could have had it long before. His answer was that he wanted the money, not for himself, but for another who was in trouble and needed his help. This awakened both my interest and curiosity, whereupon he explained that three of his friends had spent the night in a drunken spree, had broken in almost the entire front of a grocery or saloon and otherwise committed acts of such vandalism that before daylight the sheriff was forced to apprehend them; that they were then in the latter's office and would speedily be placed in jail unless some one should appear and settle for the damage done. In a few moments I secured the money and turned it over to him. He seemed more or less relieved, and hurriedly left to interview the sheriff and as soon as possible secure the release of his erring friends. I did not press him for names, but in a short time learned that two of his friends were the sons of wealthy parents and the third, unfortunately, was his law partner. Lincoln was poorer than any of them, and yet,

notwithstanding their wealth and disgraceful conduct, he seemed to regard it his duty to crawl out of his bed before daybreak and hasten to their rescue. I doubt if another man in Springfield would have done it. No wonder he sometimes thanked God he was not born a woman!"

CHAPTER XV

How Lincoln whiled away his spare moments in Springfield — Places he was in the habit of frequenting — An evening in the office of Colonel W. B. Warren, Clerk of the Supreme Court — Incidents of Lincoln's stay at Urbana in the spring of 1856 — Stealing the hotel gong — Apprised of his vote for Vice-President at the Republican National Convention in Philadelphia — Leaving Urbana for Springfield — Riding in the omnibus — Whitney's recollection of Lincoln's modest fees — His financial accumulations — The bank account of Lincoln & Herndon.

How and where Lincoln spent his time when he was in Springfield and not traveling over the circuit is admirably told in a reminiscence by Mr. Herndon written and turned over to me by the latter not many months before his death. I had been trying to learn from him something additional about Lincoln's habits, what he did when he was not in the office, whether he was given to lounging in stores or other places where people in small towns frequently congregate — in short, how and where he spent his idle or unemployed moments. He said that Lincoln was never a lounger; that prior to 1858, by which time he had begun to attain more or less political prominence, there were only two or three places in the business part of Springfield, outside of certain law offices, he frequented, and even then his visits were never long. One of these was a drug-store, in the ownership of which his brother-in-law, Dr. Wallace, was interested. He also oftentimes stopped in at the combined store and bank of Jacob Bunn, which place he passed going to or from his home. He hardly ever visited stores to make purchases because his wife exercised undisputed control of that part of the domestic economy. But there was one

place in which, as a *raconteur*, he shone and delighted to linger, and that was the court-house.

"From 1852 to 1854," said Herndon, "I assisted Colonel W. B. Warren, of Jacksonville, who was Clerk of the Supreme Court — in other words, served as his deputy, which I could do without interfering with my law practice — and thus had an excellent opportunity to meet not only the Springfield lawyers, but those from other parts of the State as well. The Supreme Court chamber was in the northeast corner of the State House, and adjoining it on the south was the library where the lawyers usually studied their cases, made their abstracts, and prepared their briefs. Not all of them were absorbed in study, for some, less diligent than others, chatted, told stories, and in divers ways consumed the time. With but few exceptions they drank their toddy, making frequent visits to a jug of good liquor which Colonel Warren usually hid from sight, but which was never so cleverly concealed that the wise ones could not find it.

"As a rule the lawyers who wanted to study were at work the greater part of the day, but after sunset their application gradually slackened and a good part of the evening was given over to social relaxation and breezy conversation. In the gathering were numerous story-tellers, but none of them equaled Lincoln, who was invariably the central figure and by far the most entertaining and inimitable performer in the aggregation. No one enjoyed the occasion more than he. His accumulation of stories was both unique and inexhaustible. One suggested another and they followed in rapid succession. As one man used to say, 'Where he learned them and where they would end no one could tell.' Lincoln drank none of the whiskey, pushed

aside study, banished his melancholy, and joined in the general merriment. As the evening wore on the lawyers closed their books, and one after another threw aside their notes and unfinished briefs. From now on everything bespoke of fun and good humor; so much so, in fact, that Judge Caton and some of his colleagues on the bench would quit the room in which they had been studying or consulting, and, one after another, slyly slip into the library so as not to miss the stream of amusing recitals which they knew Lincoln would be pouring out for the delight and entertainment of the anxious group gathered about him.

"Meanwhile I was at my tasks, preparing records, issuing writs, and in every way endeavoring to assist Colonel Warren; but often my progress was provokingly slow, for these gatherings rarely adjourned before midnight, and occasionally, especially if Lincoln chanced to be in good trim and the supply of good cheer in that memorable jug had not run out, continuing still later. Sometimes after one of these festive and companionable evenings Lincoln and I would leave for our homes at the same time walking to a certain spot where our paths diverged. I recall one occasion. It was much past midnight and Lincoln was still jolly and bubbling over with the merriment and amusing incidents of the evening. Joyous and light-hearted, free from the look of dejection which so often beclouded his face, I believe I never saw him in happier spirits. Presently we reached the corner where we separated, each headed for his home. In a few minutes Lincoln would reach the two-story frame house at the corner of Eighth and Jackson Streets, and I confess I tried to picture to myself his changed attitude and expression and the scene that would ensue after he

had crossed his threshold at that unseemly hour and undertook to square himself with that capricious little wife whose chief asset was a piercing voice and a fiery temper."

By the time 1856 rolled around, the calls for Lincoln to take part in the political campaign of that year became so numerous and persistent that his friends began to wonder if he could afford any longer to ignore the demand. He was still actively engaged in his chosen profession, but there was a charm about the attrition of a political campaign which he was daily finding it more difficult to resist. At the Republican National Convention, which was held in Philadelphia that year, he received 110 votes for Vice-President, a fact which serves to indicate that he was growing in popular favor. At the very time the convention met, Lincoln was at the town of Urbana, Illinois, attending an extra session of the Circuit Court. Henry C. Whitney who, with David Davis and Leonard Swett, was oftener and longer with Lincoln while making the rounds of the circuit than any one else, told me once a reminiscence of the court at Urbana at this time, well worth recording.

"Judge Davis," said Whitney, "held the court, and Lincoln, who had two or three cases to try, was there also. At the judge's request I secured a room for him, also for Lincoln and myself, at the American House, a primitive hostelry kept by one John Dunaway. The building had three front entrances from the street, but not a single hall downstairs; one of these entrances led directly into the ladies' parlor, and from it an entrance was obtained to the dining-room and from another corner a flight of stairs conducted us to our room. Close by the front and dining-room doors hung a gong which our vulgar boniface, standing in the

doorway immediately beneath our windows, was in the habit of beating vigorously as a prelude to our meals. It was frequently very annoying, and so often disturbed our slumbers in the early dawn that we decided one morning it must be removed or forever silenced. By a majority vote Lincoln was chosen to carry out the decree. Accordingly, shortly before noon, he left the court-room, hastened to the hotel, passed through the dining-room, and, in a mischievous prank, took the offensive and noisy instrument from the place where it hung and quietly secreted it between the top and false bottom of a center table where no one would have thought of looking for it. In a short time I encountered Dunaway, our host, coming down from our room, where he had been and still was searching anxiously for the gong which some ruthless hand had, alas, abstracted. I passed on, and when I reached our room I realized I was in the presence of the culprit, for there sat Lincoln in a chair tilted awkwardly against the wall after his fashion, looking amused, sheepish, and guilty, as if he had done something ridiculous as well as reprehensible. The truth is we all enjoyed the landlord's discomfiture, and even Judge Davis, who urged Lincoln to restore the gong, was amused. Presently, however, Lincoln and I repaired to the dining-room, and while I held the two contiguous doors fast Lincoln restored the gong to its accustomed place, after which he bounded up the stairs two steps at a time, I following. The next day when the Chicago paper came in — it usually arrived about noon — it brought the news that Lincoln had received 110 votes for Vice-President at the Philadelphia Convention the day before. The announcement created something of a stir. Lincoln and Davis had left the court-

room and had gone down to the hotel, where I joined them a few minutes later, bringing with me Judge Cunningham's copy of the 'Chicago Press' which I read to them. Of course Davis and I were more or less jubilant. Alluding to Lincoln's rude and undignified prank with the hotel gong, Davis laughed and with harmless irony admonished him: 'Great business for a man who aspires to be Vice-President of the United States.' But the news of the honor shown him at the Philadelphia Convention made but slight impression on Lincoln. Apparently he was unmoved, if not indifferent, his only response being: 'I reckon it's not me. There's another Lincoln down in Massachusetts. I've an idea he's the one.'

"The term of court that week at Urbana was decidedly prosaic, and the cases tried, usually by the court without the aid of a jury, were meager both in amount and incident. In due time Lincoln was ready to return home. He had collected twenty-five or thirty dollars for that term's business, and one of our clients owed him ten dollars which he felt disappointed at not being able to collect; so I gave him a check for that amount and went with him to the bank to get it cashed. T. S. Hubbard was the cashier who waited on us. I never saw Lincoln happier than when he gathered his little earnings together, being, as I now recollect it, less than forty dollars, and had his carpet-bag packed ready to start home."

Mr. Whitney, the narrator of the preceding incidents, was one of Lincoln's favorites among the lawyers of central Illinois. Judged by Lincoln's letter to him prior to 1860, which he permitted me to read, along with other facts of equal convincing value, one cannot doubt that he en-

joyed Lincoln's full confidence. A native of New England he emigrated to central Illinois early in the fifties.

"Very soon thereafter," he once said to me, "I became acquainted with Lincoln. It was about the time of my first appearance at the bar. I did not feel the slightest delicacy in approaching him for assistance; for it seemed as if he invited me to familiarity if not close intimacy at once; and this from no selfish motive at all — nothing but pure philanthropy and goodness of heart to a young lawyer just beginning his career. He sat on the bench for the judge a while that term; and my first motion in court was made before him. The next day he made some arrangements for his horse and buggy and took the train to fill an appointment farther north.

"I saw him start for the train. He was obliged to ride over two miles in an old dilapidated omnibus, and being the sole occupant of the conveyance had somewhere procured and held in his hand a small French harp with which he was making the most execrable music. I rallied him on this, to which, stopping his concert, he replied: 'This is my band; Douglas had a brass band at Peoria, but this will do me.' He resumed his uncouth solo as the vehicle drove off, and the primitive strains, somewhat shaken up by the jolting conveyance, floated out upon the air till distance intervened."

The recollection by Mr. Whitney of the extent of Lincoln's earnings on the circuit naturally led to the contemplation of his financial status generally. When I inquired into that subject in Springfield I soon learned that as customers or patrons of the banks Lincoln & Herndon never rose above the lesser lights. As a firm they were anything

but substantial depositors — in fact, the balance occasionally placed to their credit was usually so meager they could scarcely be listed among the depositors, save in name. A bank attaché told me that if, in the course of business, Lincoln & Herndon received a check or draft it was rarely ever deposited with the bank to be placed to the firm's credit and drawn upon as is customary among bank patrons; but instead one or the other of the two constituting the firm, as soon as a remittance reached them, took it to the bank, drew the requisite cash, and promptly returned to the office to divide the proceeds with his partner. It will thus be seen that their partnership, so far as the division of earnings was concerned, was settled every day before the sun went down. It was a simple but effective way of keeping their books balanced.

"While Lincoln and I were partners," wrote Mr. Herndon to me several years ago, "we kept no books as to our partnership, though we did, of course, keep due account of our transactions so far as other interests were involved. Lincoln did the major part of the circuit work while I remained in Springfield to look after the local end of the business. Occasionally I was out on the circuit with him, but never for long periods. At such times all moneys paid to either of us was immediately divided. What Lincoln collected on the circuit, when I was back in Springfield, he would bring home with him. If, when he returned, it happened I was not in the office, he would withdraw from his pocket-book my share, wrap the money in a paper with a slip attached, containing my name and a memorandum indicating whence it came, and place it in a certain drawer where I would be sure to find it. If, on the other hand, I

was in the office when he arrived he would open his pocket-book and make the requisite division. He was so prompt and his rule was so invariable I ventured once to ask him why he was so timely and particular in the matter. 'Well, Billy,' he answered, 'there are three reasons: first, unless I did so I might forget I had collected the money; secondly, I explain to you how and from whom I received the money, so that you will not be required to dun the man who paid it; thirdly, if I were to die you would have no evidence that I had your money. By marking the money it automatically becomes yours and I have no right in law or morals to retain or use it. I make it a practice never to use another man's money without his consent.'"

Late in the fifties, when he had attained the proportions of a United States Senator, Lincoln opened an individual bank account. He began to deposit his personal funds with the Marine Bank, one of the leading financial concerns of Springfield, presided over by his old friend and client Jacob Bunn. A brief perusal, however, of such of the old books as have been preserved proves that his transactions were of exceedingly modest proportions. Among his checks which were shown me, one of the largest — given, probably, for improvements to his residence — did not exceed two hundred dollars. As it was drawn by Lincoln immediately after the famous Rock Island Bridge suit it is fair to infer that it represented a portion of the fee paid him for his services in that case.

CHAPTER XVI

Instances of Lincoln's weakness — His unwonted faith in certain friends — His blindness to their faults — His failure to redeem Herndon — Joining the charmed circle at the tavern — His bland and inexplicable confidence in the ability and moral influence of Ward Lamon — Appoints him United States Marshal of the District of Columbia — Lamon's attempt to influence General Frémont — Scheme to transport troops to West Virginia — The pretended Lamon's Brigade — Investigation by Congressional committee which denounces Lamon in scathing report — Notwithstanding opposition of fifteen Senators Lincoln adheres to him — Mark W. Delahay another instance of Lincoln's misplaced confidence — Surprise of John J. Ingalls — Lincoln finally appoints him United States Judge for the District of Kansas — Congressional committee visits Kansas to investigate Delahay's moral and official conduct — Delahay resigns to avoid impeachment — Lincoln's appointment of Simon Cameron and the trouble it gave him — Herndon's letter to Henry Wilson — Lincoln's real estimate of Douglas — What he told C. H. Moore about Douglas — Incidents of the joint debate — The recollections of Horace White.

No portrait of Lincoln, no delineation of his character can be deemed accurate or complete which does not take into the account certain attributes — more properly speaking, weaknesses — which were well known to many of his close friends. As one of the latter, Leonard Swett, said to me: "If Lincoln had some faults, we should not forget that Washington had more: few men less." It was the bard of Avon who makes one of his characters say:

> The web of our life is of a mingled yarn, good and ill together; our virtues would be proud, if our faults whipped them not; and our crimes would despair, if they were not cherished by our virtues.

This sapient reflection can most fittingly be applied to Lincoln. True his delinquencies were not glaring, as compared to those of many others, but they were none the less inherent and characteristic. As I have elsewhere noted, both David Davis and Herndon insisted that Lin-

coln's wife was a better reader of men and in some respects a safer guide than he. In the selection of his associates, those on whom, when in doubt or danger, he expected to rely, we cannot avoid the conclusion that he was either so blinded by his affection for them that he could not see their shortcomings, or so indifferent, if not perverse, that he cared nothing for public opinion. There is abundant ground for the belief expressed by the late Horace White that there was a certain degree of moral obtuseness in Abraham Lincoln which the public do not recognize and will refuse to believe in the present generation.

Take, for example, the case of his law partner Herndon. It cannot be denied that he was conversant with the latter's bibulous and unfortunate habits. Although Herndon was able if not more or less brilliant, Lincoln knew that he was headed downhill, and yet there is no evidence that he sought to restrain him or even criticized him for his moral laxity. Advice and admonition from Lincoln might have been efficacious in Herndon's reformation; it undoubtedly would have steadied him, but often though he yielded to temptation and fell from grace Lincoln said nothing. Instead of chiding and repelling him as a mark of his disapproval of his conduct, Lincoln seemed to cling to him all the closer. He was ten years older than Herndon and knew that the latter looked up to and believed in him; he also had due regard for Herndon's ability. On the whole, therefore, had he made the proper effort, it would seem as if he might have saved him. An instance cited by Henry C. Whitney is further illuminative of Lincoln's peculiarities. "He did not like the man regarded as the best lawyer in a

neighboring county seat," said Whitney, "nor, for that matter, did the latter like him; but a drunken fellow, who turned lawyer later in life and settled there, Lincoln used to seek and play billiards with by the hour."

On the circuit where he spent half of his time, Lincoln's closest and most confidential friend was Ward H. Lamon, or "Hill" Lamon as he was commonly known to his associates. Lamon lived at Danville and was a mediocre lawyer. He suffered himself in later years to be advertised to the world as Lincoln's law partner and he was sometimes associated in lawsuits with Lincoln, as the records of the courts in Vermillion and also in McLean County, Illinois, indicate; but the partnership was invariably limited to the case in hand. After the separation from Stuart and Logan in succession Lincoln's only partnership was with Herndon, who remained in charge of the firm's business in Springfield.

When in his rounds over the circuit Lincoln reached Danville, where Lamon held forth, it was the signal for a jolly if not uproarious time. Usually after dark when the business of the court for the day was over, a certain crowd of companionable brethren gathered in Lincoln's and Judge Davis's rooms at the hotel. It was Lamon's business to provide a pitcher of good liquor, which duty having been performed, the fun for the evening was due to begin. Davis scarcely imbibed, but Lamon and certain others were far more generous in their potations. In time Lincoln or Davis, realizing that Lamon was "mellow" enough, would exclaim, "Now, Hill, let us have some music," whereupon Lamon would respond by rendering the plaintive strains of "The Blue-Tailed Fly," or "Cousin Sally Downard," or

some other ballad of equal interest but less propriety. Thus the hours flew by, and in proportion as the fluid in the pitcher diminished the hilarity increased. Occupying a seat in this charmed circle and joining heartily in the rude and equivocal merriment was Lincoln himself, who, strange to relate, never touched a drop of the liquor; and this, as John Hay said, "not from any scruples or from principle, but simply because he did not like wine or spirits."

The confidence and intimacy between Lincoln and Lamon began early and continued without interruption. Notwithstanding the feeble esteem in which Lamon was held by others, as well as the many things Lincoln himself must have known about him, Lincoln closed his eyes to the man's imperfections and clung tenaciously to him. Nothing, it seemed, could shake his faith in him. Among Lincoln's earliest official acts as President was the appointment of Lamon United States Marshal of the District of Columbia, which office Lamon was still holding at the time of Lincoln's death. In the fall of 1861 Lamon turned up in St. Louis, and on the strength of his close relations with Lincoln attempted to secure from General Frémont an order authorizing a regiment, the 39th Illinois Volunteers, to be sent to Williamsport, Maryland, to join the so-called General Lamon's Brigade in West Virginia — a military organization having its existence only in Lamon's brain. His "unwarranted and scandalous assumption of authority" prompted an investigation by Congress. The Special Committee reported as follows: "The cost of the transportation of the regiment from St. Louis to Williamsport, Maryland, would be about thirty thousand dollars and there is no law authorizing the transfer of troops from one

department to another without the special order of the Secretary of War or Commander-in-Chief. Edward Castle, in charge of railroad transportation in the Western Department, says that on October 26, 1861, Lamon was introduced to him as a brigadier-general from Washington, D. C., and that he was wearing the uniform of such a military officer. Lamon's object was to have Castle send him next day by special express train from St. Louis to Springfield at the expense of the Government. Castle, who was much flattered by Lamon's attentions, ordered an engine and car and took Lamon and several friends. In going to St. Louis to see Frémont, Castle not only provided it should be free of expense, but directed the express messenger to 'show General Lamon every attention and contribute to his comfort.'"

In its report the Special Committee insisted that the removal of the regiment desired by Lamon had no other object beyond that gentleman's personal gratification. "At such a time," is the language of the report, "when every dollar in the Treasury is needed to crush the Rebellion, we submit that thirty thousand dollars is too large a sum to be expended for the purpose of flattering the vanity of any single individual. The removal of the regiment not only without authority of the law, but inexpedient and without justification and thirty thousand dollars of the public money worse than squandered, Lamon had no authority to travel in special trains at public expense, and he should be called on to refund the amount paid for special trains which took him and his friends from St. Louis to Springfield, Illinois. If he should not do so the Treasury Department should ascertain what the amount is and deduct

from his salary as Marshal of the District of Columbia. It turns out from a letter of the Secretary of War that this gentleman, who proclaimed himself a brigadier-general and who was wearing the insignia of that distinguished rank, had no such an appointment. All such pretenses are unfounded as was also the pretense that the President told him he might take this regiment. He seems to have made use of his official position as Marshal of the District of Columbia and his assumed position as a brigadier-general to secure his object of removing the regiment and traveling in special trains at public expense. Instead of devoting his attention to the duties of his position, instead of watching and protecting the interests of the Government in the sphere of duty assigned him, he has been engaged in the business described by the committee above."

In January, 1862, Senator Grimes of Iowa exposed the fraud in a speech in open Senate, denouncing Lamon so scathingly that it caused a coolness between himself and Lincoln during the remainder of the latter's life. Senator Wilson of Massachusetts said that Lamon was so notoriously unfit for his office that he and fourteen other Senators voted against the confirmation of his appointment. And this is the man who, in February, 1861, when the President-elect was spirited through Philadelphia on his way from Harrisburg to Washington, was, on account of his spotless and sterling manhood, selected by Lincoln as his trusted companion rather than Colonel E. V. Sumner and Major David Hunter, military officers of approved courage and high standing who had been sent to Lincoln by General Scott for that purpose. A few weeks later, and after the inauguration, when the situation regarding

Fort Sumter was becoming daily more acute, Lincoln caused Lamon to be sent to Charleston, South Carolina, on what the latter said was "a confidential mission of great delicacy and importance." Nicolay and Hay say that he came with an "ostensible Government mission, was looked upon as the real Presidential messenger, was treated to a formal audience with Governor Pickens and permitted to make a visit to Fort Sumter, meanwhile, hobnobbing with the young Secessionists at the Charleston Hotel."

Another notable instance of Lincoln's susceptible nature and misplaced confidence was Mark W. Delahay. a mediocre, if not obscure, lawyer who, during Lincoln's earlier years, flourished in the neighborhood of Jacksonville and Petersburg in Illinois. Delahay laid claim to an intimate personal and professional acquaintance with Lincoln, in support of which he would relate numerous stories to impress his hearers with the importance of that relation. "It so happened that at my attendance at court in Menard County," was one of his recitals, "Mr. Lincoln was absent during the early part of the term, much to the regret of a number of young men who had been indicted for playing cards and were expecting Lincoln to represent them; but on account of his absence I was employed to assist in their defense. Mr. Lincoln's love of joking, for which he became famous in the latter days of his life, was quite as marked during the earlier period. He used to relate to his friends at the bar, and after he became President, some incidents connected with my defense of these young men. Sometimes he would tell it as upon 'a young lawyer' or sometimes on 'Delahay.' The prosecuting attorney in framing the indictments alternately charged the defend-

ants with playing a certain game of cards called 'Seven-Up,' and in the next bill charged them with playing cards at a game called 'Old Sledge.' Four defendants were indicted in each bill. The prosecutor, being entirely unacquainted with games at cards, did not know that both 'Seven-Up' and 'Old Sledge' were one and the same. On the trial on the bills describing the game as 'Seven-Up' Delahay's witnesses would swear that the game played was 'Old Sledge,' and *vice versa* on the bills alleging the latter. The result was an acquittal in every case under instructions of the court. The prosecutor never found out the dodge until the trials were over and immense fun and rejoicing were indulged in as the result."

Late in the fifties Delahay turned up in Kansas, where he became more or less conspicuous in the politics of that locality. He was a candidate or applicant for almost every office from county surveyor to United States Senator. In 1859 Lincoln visited Kansas and made a few speeches there, being for a time a guest at Delahay's home. This so stimulated the latter's confidence in his own importance that he tried, unsuccessfully, to be chosen a delegate from Kansas to the Chicago Convention in 1860. He had divulged to Lincoln his ambition in that direction, but he was so impecunious he was unable to bear the expense of a trip to Chicago, and after Lincoln's death a letter was found, written by him to Delahay, in which he offered to furnish him a hundred dollars for that purpose. Lincoln's faith in the man continued unabated, a fact demonstrated by another letter of Lincoln written in March, 1861, less than ten days after his inauguration as President. It was addressed to Delahay and virtually turned over to

him the federal patronage of Kansas, a proposition which so profoundly awakened the interest of the late Senator John J. Ingalls of that State that he visited me at my home several years ago in an endeavor, as he claimed, to learn the truth regarding the story. "I knew Delahay well," said Ingalls, "but he was so weak and debased I cannot think that Lincoln, who also knew him, believed in or trusted him." Convinced that Ingalls questioned the current story, I withdrew from the place where it had been stored Lincoln's original letter to Delahay and gave it to Ingalls to read. I shall never forget the look of astonishment that spread over his face as he read it.

In 1859 Delahay aspired to a seat in the United States Senate from Kansas and promptly invoked Lincoln's aid. He evidently wanted Lincoln to intercede with General James H. Lane in his behalf. Instead of approaching Lane directly, as Delahay asked, Lincoln sought to accomplish the desired end by a somewhat circuitous, but equally effective route. He wrote Delahay a letter in which he committed himself to his candidacy, at the same time telling him he might show the letter to General Lane and thus gain the latter's support — a suggestive specimen of Lincoln's subtlety as a politician. In April, 1861, Lincoln appointed Delahay Surveyor-General of Kansas and Nebraska, which office he seems to have filled till October 5, 1863, when Lincoln appointed him United States District Judge for Kansas. His daughter, Mary E. Delahay, is authority for the statement that Lincoln offered to appoint him Minister to Chile, which post he declined. But despite his political ambition, his ability and pretensions, Delahay was both debased and corrupt. It is hard

to believe that Lincoln was not aware of it, for eventually Delahay's conduct became so flagrant and notorious that a committee of the lower House of Congress at Washington, consisting of Messrs. Bingham of Ohio, Butler of Massachusetts, Mercer of Pennsylvania, Peters of Maine, Wilson and Voorhees of Indiana, and Eldredge of Wisconsin, were appointed to impeach him. The committee journeyed to Kansas, where it examined numerous witnesses and otherwise endeavored to investigate the record and conduct of the accused judge.

The testimony showed that Delahay was a confirmed drunkard and frequently sat on the bench and presided at trials in a maudlin, befuddled condition. In some instances at the hotel and other public places where he appeared he reeled and had to be assisted in moving from one point to another. He even staggered on one occasion in an attempt to cross the floor of the court-room and he was drunk on the bench within sixty days after his appointment by Lincoln in the fall of 1863. On another occasion he was sentencing a man who had been found guilty of an offense wherein the law fixes the minimum penalty at two years' imprisonment and a fine of a thousand dollars; but Judge Delahay reduced the fine one half and refused to add any further penalty, after which he turned to the astonished crowd in the court-room and exclaimed: "You have been a long time impeaching old Mark Delahay. Now would be a good time to try him!" On numerous occasions he would interrupt attorneys in court, admonishing them that they must either "fish or cut bait." A. L. Williams, the United States District Attorney, testified that late in the year 1863 Delahay was drunk in court. When sentencing crim-

inals he could not remember names or offenses for which convicted. "I delayed bringing up defendants for several days at times," continued Williams, "for the express purpose of having them sentenced by a sober court. After the death of my father, who was Delahay's predecessor on the bench, I went to see Lincoln and told him of Delahay's unfitness. I also spoke to several Senators expressing my disapproval. I felt aggrieved that the position my father had so honorably filled should be occupied by such an inferior if not disreputable successor."

The most suggestive, if not damaging, thing which awakened the doubt and attention of the Congressional committee arose from reports floating about regarding the disposition of what was known as the Confiscation Fund — moneys in Kansas as well as other Northern States belonging to Rebels subject to confiscation, and which were duly turned over to the United States authorities. In the case of Delahay, owing to his vicious habits and his questionable record generally, it became noised about that he was unable in certain instances to account satisfactorily for all sums that passed through his hands. However, there was no legal evidence that Delahay was guilty of retaining confiscation funds, but, owing probably to the fear that the committee might strike paying dirt and in order to avoid embarrassing if not scandalous disclosures generally, Delahay felt impelled to act. To meet the array of testimony piling up against him was an ordeal from which he revolted. He therefore took the bull by the horns and averted further inquiry by resigning.

After Delahay was out of office he prepared a lecture on Lincoln, a copy of which I ran across among some papers

turned over to me by Mr. Herndon several years ago. I loaned it to Horace White, who read it and then wrote me: "I thank you for sending me Delahay's lecture on Lincoln, which I have read and return herewith. There is one passage in it which would make a horse laugh if he knew Delahay as we knew him. It is the one where he eulogizes Lincoln's 'unerring judgment of men and his intuitive knowledge of character.'"

The most glaring instance of Lincoln's weakness in judging of individual men, their character or fitness, — in other words, his lack of acumen, — was the appointment, knowing his record and what manner of man he was, of Simon Cameron to a place in his Cabinet. In the words of Mr. White: "It was the most colossal blunder of Lincoln's public life — if it is proper to call it a blunder; for it may have a worse name in history a hundred years hence." The Cameron incident has been so exhaustively dealt with by Nicolay and Hay and other historians of the Civil War period but little remains for me to add. "There is, however, another fact in this connection," wrote Mr. White in a letter to me shortly before his death, "which somebody else will bring out in the course of historical criticism. That is that after Cameron came back from Russia Lincoln was just as friendly to him as though nothing had happened to force him out of the Cabinet. He appointed him Minister to Russia with all his imperfections in his head and received him back in the same way; and if I recollect rightly employed him in running political errands just prior to the National Republican Convention of 1864. That I call moral obtuseness of the same kind as his intimacy with Lamon, Delahay et al."

In their knowledge of Lincoln, in their analysis of his growth, his unfolding in "morals and motives," no two men I met in Illinois impressed me more profoundly than Herndon and Horace White. One, a lawyer, the other an able editor, and both so situated that they could observe Lincoln at closer range than the majority of his other friends, they nevertheless seem to have viewed him from somewhat different angles. Herndon's estimate of the President-elect as outlined in his letter to Henry Wilson of Massachusetts, in December, 1860, is one of the cleverest bits of character delineation one is likely to encounter. Herndon admitted that Lincoln in his ability to read men, to decide many of the questions of administration or of political economy, questions which no man can demonstrate, was, in a sense, weak and his friends could rule him. "But when on justice, right, liberty, the Constitution and the Union," he says in his letter to Wilson, "then you may all stand aside: he will rule then and no man can move him — no set of men can do it. There is no fail here. This is Lincoln, and you mark my prediction. You and I must keep the people right: God will keep Lincoln right."

Mr. White viewed Lincoln through the eyes of a trained newspaper student. Being the correspondent and ultimately one of the editors of the "Chicago Tribune," which was so potent a force in moulding public opinion during the decade when Lincoln, as a leader, was in the making, he was close to the latter. He enjoyed his confidence, frequently accompanied him, sometimes lodging in the same room, in his travels over the State as a campaign speaker. His observation and judgment of Lincoln are therefore not without their weight.

"The popular conception of Mr. Lincoln," said White, "as one seeking honors, but not avoiding public duties is a *post-bellum* growth very wide of the mark. He was entirely human in this regard, but his desire for political preferment was hedged about by a sense of obligation to the truth which nothing could shake. This fidelity to the truth was ingrained and unchangeable. He was one of the shrewdest politicians of the State. Nobody had more experience in that way, nobody knew better than he what was passing in the minds of the people. Nobody knew better how to turn things to advantage politically and nobody was readier to take such advantage, provided it did not involve dishonest means. He could not cheat people out of their votes any more than out of their money.

"Mr. Lincoln never gave assent so far as my knowledge goes to any plan or project for getting votes that would not have borne the full light of day. At the same time he had no objection to the getting of votes by the pledge of offices, nor was he too particular what kind of men got the offices. His preference was always for good men; but he could not resist pressure where persons were concerned even though his conscience told him he was doing wrong. In the case of Simon Cameron it was impossible for Lincoln to retain him after the House had censured him. He could not have carried on the Government with such a burden and blot. Yet Lincoln whitewashed him by giving him the Russian mission, and after he came back Lincoln made him his friend and confidential agent in politics. I remember well how Lincoln fell in the estimation of the best men in Congress in consequence of his association with Cameron after the latter came back from Russia."

At this point in my story I hope it will not be considered amiss if I digress slightly in order to comply with the request of an old friend who earnestly besought me not to omit suitable mention of Lincoln's real estimate or appreciation of Stephen A. Douglas. In order to obey the mandate and quiet the apprehensions of this anxious old friend, I made a careful and conscientious inquiry and dug deeply enough into the subject to convince me that, in so far as the personal relations of Lincoln and Douglas toward each other were concerned, no differences between them worthy of note existed. Moreover, a careful study of their famous joint debate in 1858 warrants the conclusion that in every regard Lincoln treated his competitor with the proper degree of dignity and respect. I was always impressed by Herndon's conclusions regarding Douglas. He said: "He was full of political history, well-informed on general topics, eloquent almost to the point of brilliancy, self-confident to the point of arrogance, and a dangerous competitor in every respect. What he lacked in ingenuity he made up in strategy, and if in debate he could not tear down the structure of his opponent's argument by a direct and violent attack he was by no means reluctant to resort to a strained restatement of the latter's position or the extravagance of ridicule. As a lawyer I found him to be broad, fair, and liberal-minded. Although not a thorough student of the law his large fund of common sense kept him in the front rank. Usually he was both just and generous and, so far as I knew, never stooped to gain a case. Lincoln, I remember, viewed him very much as I did. Although not in every respect commendatory Lincoln's estimate of Douglas could not be called unfair. The truth is I recall but

two men that Lincoln really praised: Jefferson and Clay; and of the very few I heard him condemn Douglas was one. I remember an incident in our office once when some one present exclaimed, 'It's a lie,' alluding to a statement made by a man who had just left the room. 'A lie!' interrupted Lincoln. 'Did you ever read the "Life of Patrick Henry"?' alluding to Wirt's 'Life' of Henry which some people regard as a great exaggeration."

Mention of Lincoln's opinion of Douglas carries me back several years to a time when I was in the town of Clinton, Illinois, and visited Mr. Clifton H. Moore, one of Lincoln's associates in the days when he rode the circuit. An able and successful lawyer Mr. Moore was also something of an authority on the development of Illinois, because, during the period when Lincoln and Douglas were contending for leadership in their respective parties, Mr. Moore was himself a political factor of no mean proportions. An enthusiastic adherent of Lincoln he was also acquainted with and well qualified to pass on the record and merits of Douglas. "In the summer of 1858," said Mr. Moore to me, "Douglas made a speech at Pontiac during the course of which he ventured to quote from Holland's 'Life of Van Buren.' A day or so later Lincoln passed through here and among other things told me that Douglas in his speech at Pontiac had seriously misquoted Holland, a fact he could easily establish if he only had Holland's book; but unfortunately not a copy was to be found in Clinton. The next morning he pushed on to Bloomington. He was still so wrought up over Douglas's misrepresentation that David Davis was finally induced to send a man on horseback to Springfield with a note from Lincoln asking for the book. In due time

the messenger returned with the desired volume which he turned over to Lincoln, who took it with him, threatening to confront Douglas with it at the earliest opportunity."

As indicative of Lincoln's real opinion of Douglas, Mr. Moore related this circumstance which so deeply impressed me that I made a note of it at the time: "On the day Mr. Lincoln delivered his speech at Clinton during the campaign of 1858 he was in my office; and I shall always remember with regret one thing he said about Douglas, which was this: 'Douglas will tell a lie to ten thousand people one day, even though he knows he may have to deny it to five thousand the next.'"

It was in the domain of political agitation that Lincoln mistrusted Douglas. It was there the latter manifested his dexterity and lack of rectitude; and it was done so invariably and unmistakably there is little wonder that Lincoln eventually lost faith in him. It will be remembered that in the fall of 1854 Douglas deceived Lincoln, if he did not actually break his word, when he journeyed to the town of Princeton and there renewed his campaign, colliding in debate with Owen Lovejoy, in violation of an agreement or understanding to the contrary made with Lincoln a few days before at Peoria. "Upon being charged afterwards with his breach of word," related Herndon, "Douglas responded that Lovejoy 'bantered and badgered' him so persistently he could not resist the encounter. The whole thing, I remember, thoroughly displeased Lincoln."

When I reminded Horace White, who heard every one of the Lincoln-Douglas debates, of the incident just related he said: "The fact I had in mind when I spoke of Douglas's unveracity in stump speaking was a statement

he made at the Ottawa joint debate in which he said that Lincoln as a young man 'could ruin more liquor than all of the boys in town together.' This was said in order to draw Lincoln into a personal controversy. Everybody who knew Lincoln knew that he never used liquor or tobacco at all. He said to me once that he had never taken a drink of any alcoholic beverage in the past twenty years. That he should have been a drunkard before 1838 is impossible. Not only was Douglas's statement essentially false as to Lincoln, but it would have been a true description of himself (Douglas) at the time of the Ottawa debate. The fact was that Douglas at that time was drinking himself to death — an end which he reached three years later. The pen of the historian has not touched upon that fact as yet.

"I have no doubt whatever that Douglas made that false statement about Lincoln to get a denial from him that he was a drinking man, in which event he would have enlarged upon it and given particulars which he could easily have invented and would have assured Lincoln that he did not wish to injure him, etc., leading off the debate into a personal quagmire as was his habit when he was getting the worst of it. But Lincoln was too smart. He never noticed the charge at all. So Douglas never repeated it."

The joint debate between Lincoln and Douglas in 1858 has been so exhaustively treated in the volume issued by the Illinois State Historical Library in 1908, and so vividly portrayed by Horace White who heard all the speeches, it would savor of supererogation were I to attempt a further or more comprehensive account of it. It suffices to say that, viewed from various angles, it was one of the greatest forensic combats the country has known.

Having so effectively demonstrated his ability to cope with Douglas in 1854 when, to use a homely figure of speech, he "ran the latter into his hole," Lincoln was ready if not really anxious to measure swords with him in 1858. That he was sure of himself is illustrated by the surprisingly meager preparations he seems to have made for a joust with an adversary as daring and resourceful as Douglas. In another chapter I have alluded to the reference-book filled with sundry notes and newspaper clippings which he carried with him during the canvass. Although small enough to fit comfortably into his coat-pocket it contained all the ammunition he saw fit to store away and hurl at Douglas when scheduled to meet him in combat. I once showed it to Mr. White, who recognized it, but assured me that Lincoln was so conversant with the various phases of the dominant questions and otherwise so well equipped he could recall but two instances when Lincoln felt impelled to read from or otherwise refer to it.

The debate itself was conducted on an animated and yet magnanimous plane. Notwithstanding the multitude of ardent supporters who gathered about the speakers and the spirited feeling which naturally was awakened, the two contestants, as a rule, kept within decent and reasonable bounds. In some respects it was a test of patience and forbearance hardly short of sublime. Mr. Lincoln bore himself with dignity and composure. His nearest approach to an exhibition of anger or irritation was at the debate at Charleston. There, in answer to the "old charge revived by Judge Douglas" against Lincoln for opposing the Mexican War, the latter caught Mr. Orlando B. Ficklin, who

was sitting on the platform, by the collar and led him forward. Lincoln was visibly agitated, in fact deeply aroused by Douglas's innuendo. "I do not mean to do anything with Mr. Ficklin," he exclaimed, "except to present his face and tell you that *he personally knows it to be a lie*. He was a member of Congress at the only time I was in Congress, and he knows that whenever there was an attempt to procure a vote of mine which would endorse the origin and justice of the war, I refused to give such endorsement and voted against it; but I never voted against the supplies for the army, and he knows as well as Judge Douglas that whenever a dollar was asked by way of compensation or otherwise for the benefit of the soldiers, *I gave all the votes that Ficklin or Douglas did and perhaps more.*" (*Loud applause.*)

Mr. White further explained that Lincoln, who was expecting Douglas to repeat at Charleston, or, as he termed it, renew the old charge regarding his vote on the Mexican War, had prepared himself accordingly. The "Congressional Globe" or some like public document contained his record on the subject with which he intended to confront Douglas when the proper time came, but the desired volume had inadvertently been left in a law office downtown and about a mile away from the Fair Ground where the debate was being held. A boy was dispatched thither to get it; but before the messenger returned, Lincoln without waiting for the book became aroused, and noting the presence of Mr. Ficklin on the stand led him forward and the dramatic incident just related followed.

A glance at the map of Illinois will suffice to convince the reader that of the seven places where Lincoln and Douglas

were scheduled to measure swords in joint debate, Charleston, the fourth in the list, was the point farthest east. Consequently it was nearest to the Indiana line, and thither the multitudes from the Hoosier State, scarcely less anxious to greet the doughty gladiators than their Illinois brethren, gradually wended their way. The newspapers of the period report that among the crowds which reached Charleston before and on the day of the debate one delegation "comprising eleven cars of passengers on the Alton road came from Terre Haute alone." The leading band in the parade hailed from Bowling Green, also in western Indiana. Three of the most adept fife-and-drum musicians as well as certain other persons came from my own home — the town of Greencastle, only a few miles east of Terre Haute. Of the latter one was Dillard C. Donnohue, a lawyer and partner of John P. Usher, afterwards Secretary of the Interior in President Lincoln's Cabinet. In 1860 Donnohue was a delegate to the Chicago Convention and voted for Lincoln, who, when he became President, rewarded him by sending him on a diplomatic mission to the West Indies. In later years, he often entertained me with interesting recollections of the Lincoln-Douglas debates. One incident impressed me. He related that while at Charleston he was a guest of the Capitol House where Mr. Lincoln was also quartered before and after the debate. Of course the latter was always surrounded by a crowd of listeners and, as contended by Donnohue, was thoroughly out of patience with Douglas because of his conduct that day. He made no concealment of his indignation. It will be remembered that Mrs. Douglas, described by Horace White as "a lady of attractive presence and queenly face

and figure," was in the habit, as the campaign progressed, of accompanying her husband to most of his appointments. This circumstance evidently did not escape the notice of Lincoln, who doubtless knew the lady and realized the extent of her influence over her husband; for when alluding to Douglas for the benefit of the crowd gathered about him at the hotel, Mr. Donnohue said he heard Lincoln make this statement: "I flatter myself that thus far my wife has not found it necessary to follow me around from place to place to keep me from getting drunk."

CHAPTER XVII

Lincoln as a student — The effect of a college education — Comparison of John Fiske's and Lincoln's conception of social evolution — Lincoln takes up Euclid — Reading "The Annual of Science" — Studying higher mathematics — His attempt to square the circle — His self-confidence and secretiveness — His mechanical bent — Securing a patent — Working on the model of his invention at Walter Davis's shop — Explaining it to his partner and callers at his office — Preparing his lecture on "Discoveries and Inventions" — Delivers it at Jacksonville and Springfield — What some of his colleagues thought about it — Several paragraphs of the lecture — Account by S. H. Melvin of what Lincoln did with the manuscript — Herndon also enters the lecture field — Delivers his effort entitled "The Sweep of Commerce" before an audience in Cook's Hall in Springfield — What the "Journal" said about it.

THERE is no gainsaying the assertion that Lincoln was in the main a profound student. A natural logician and patient investigator he was so relentless and unerring in his pursuit of knowledge that the question naturally arises: "What effect would the discipline and attrition of a college training have had upon him?" I have met people who pretend to believe that instead of strengthening, it would have weakened him. "If he had been trained in a university before his style of expression had crystallized," said Herndon, "his utterances, though conforming to the tenets of modern and so-called artistic criticism, would have been rounded and the sharp edges which so unmistakably betoken his individuality would have disappeared beneath the gloss of conventionality. His mental evolution was through thought to Æsop's Fables, through these to general maxims, from maxims to stories, jokes and jests; from these to clear, strong Anglo-Saxon words of power. I have heard Lincoln substantially state this, including what he

believed was the probability of the weakening process — the methods of a classical or college education."

Illustrative of this element in Mr. Lincoln's makeup and style of expression as compared to that of a profoundly scientific and college trained mind, attention is called to the "Formula of the Law of Progress" as laid down by John Fiske in his book on "Cosmic Philosophy": "The evolution of Society is a continuous establishment of psychical relations within the community in conformity to the physical and psychical relations arising in the environment; during which both the community and the environment pass from a state of relatively indefinite, incoherent homogeneity to a state of relatively definite coherent heterogeneity; and during which the constituent units of the community become even more distinctly individuated."

So much for a university-trained philosopher's conception of social evolution! But note how Lincoln, a clear-headed, self-educated man illustrates the law of progress: "Many independent men everywhere in these States a few years back in their lives were hired laborers. The prudent, penniless beginner in the world labors for wages a while, saves a surplus with which to buy tools or land for himself, then labors on his own account another while, and at length hires another new beginner to help him. This is the just and generous and prosperous system which opens the way to all, gives hope to all, and consequent energy and progress and improvement of condition to all."

The failure of Lincoln to return to Congress after the end of his first and only term in 1849 marks the beginning of an important epoch in his development. Believing he



for what they have already done, we apprehend they will be loth to proceed — The precise amount of cost already incurred we have not now at hand, but it will not greatly vary from $40 — We will direct the Sheriff to collect the balance —

As to the real estate, we can not attend to it, as agents, & we therefore recommend that you give the charge of it, to Mr. Isaac S. Britton, a trust-worthy man, & one whom the Court made an Imposer for such business. Yours &c. Logan & Lincoln

PART OF A LETTER OF LINCOLN'S TO A CLIENT (ROWLAND SMITH & CO., APRIL 24, 1844), SHOWING ERRORS IN HIS USUALLY CORRECT SPELLING

was politically moribund and yearning to broaden his knowledge, he turned most heartily to intensive study.

"He secured a copy of Euclid," related Herndon, "and took it with him on the circuit. Of nights and at odd times he would bury himself in the study of the problems of the great Greek geometrician. Occasionally I traveled with him, occupying the same bed, he reading by the light of a tallow candle. Sometimes the bedsteads were slightly short so that his feet would extend a trifle over the footboard. Thus engaged he would study for hours. Having apparently abandoned all thought of ever rising above the waves of the political sea, he became not only deeply studious and abstracted, but markedly reticent if not gloomy.

"One day about this time I purchased at Bradford & Johnson's book-store in Springfield a copy of a work called 'The Annual of Science,' as I now recall the name, and was reading it when Lincoln came in the office. In answer to his query: 'Billy, what are you reading?' I handed it to him. He looked over it for a while and then returned it with the suggestion that so far as he could observe it was constructed on the right principle. 'Unlike many books of its class,' he said, 'it recites the failures as well as the successes of life. Too often we read only of successful experiments in science and philosophy, whereas if the history of failure and defeat was included there would be a saving of brain work as well as time. The evidence of defeat, the recital of what was not as well as what cannot be done serves to put the scientist or philosopher on his guard — sets him to thinking on the right line.' In the afternoon he picked the book up again and later took it home with him to read that night. The next morning when he had re-

turned to the office he told me the book pleased him so much he had decided to buy himself a copy. I thus began to realize that he was gradually being led to the study of profound questions, for he was also steadily delving into the mysteries of mathematics and the abstruse sciences. A few days later I found him already in the office and deeply engaged when I arrived. This was unusual, for I almost invariably preceded him there. He was sitting at the table and spread out before him lay a quantity of blank paper, large heavy sheets, a compass, a rule, numerous pencils, several bottles of ink of various colors, and a profusion of stationery and writing appliances generally. He had evidently been struggling with a calculation of some magnitude, for scattered about were sheet after sheet of paper covered with an unusual array of figures. He was so deeply absorbed in study he scarcely looked up when I entered. I confess I wondered what he was doing and what had occasioned his profound application at the office so early in the morning; nor was my curiosity allayed till a later hour in the day when he arose from his chair, apparently headed for the court-house. It was then that he enlightened me by announcing that he was trying to solve the difficult problem of squaring the circle. In a short time he returned to the office and resumed his study. For the better part of the succeeding two days he continued to sit there engrossed in that difficult if not undemonstrable proposition and labored, as I thought, almost to the point of exhaustion. He talked but little about it to me or to others, so far as I could observe, but it was evident he was toiling with all his might. I have been told that the so-called squaring of the circle is a practical impossibility, but I was not aware

of it then, and I doubt if Lincoln was. His attempt to establish the proposition having resulted in failure, we, in the office, suspected that he was more or less sensitive about it and were therefore discreet enough to avoid referring to it.

"Mr. Lincoln was peculiar in that he had absolute confidence in his own powers, which will account for the fact that he never asked for advice nor sought the opinion of another for his guide. He was the most self-reliant man imaginable, standing by himself, steadfast in purpose and idea. You had to judge him by what he said. The embodiment of honesty he told the truth always in so far as he declared himself, but there were times when he was so guarded in his utterances he apparently talked without saying anything. Profoundly secretive but philosophical, he was a wily man in mental reservation, begotten by the eternal silence."

Although successful as a railsplitter, it cannot be said that Lincoln leaned toward agriculture or manifested a fondness for farm work. Instead he evinced a decided bent toward machinery or mechanical appliances, a trait he doubtless inherited from his father who was himself something of a mechanic and therefore skilled in the use of tools. It will be remembered that it was during his journey homeward from Washington after the adjournment of Congress in 1849, when he saw a steamboat stranded on a sandbar, that he conceived the idea of an apparatus designed to lift the vessel off or over the offending shoals; and later, after he had returned to Springfield he was granted a patent on a device of that kind which he had invented. "I well remember," related Herndon, "when Lincoln was

at work on his patent. He was very much taken up with the project and, for a time, would slip away from the office and hurry down to the shop of Walter Davis, a Springfield mechanic, where, with the aid of the latter and the use of his tools, he gradually constructed the model and sent it to Washington. I often saw him tinkering in Davis's shop and, on one or two occasions, owing to his absence from the office, I had to go down there and confer with him regarding matters of business. When the model was done it was brought to the office, and, with the enthusiasm of the average inventor, Lincoln would expatiate on the marvels and merits of the device for the benefit of the few persons who dropped in and were sufficiently interested to listen to his vivid and rosy predictions. Of course he talked to me about it, and although I could not, with propriety, appear to ignore it, yet it was so impractical, if not visionary, I experienced the greatest difficulty in concealing from others my lack of faith in it." Another contrivance which evoked Lincoln's study and attention was the invention of one Alexander Edmonds and known as the Horological Cradle. It brought on a lawsuit in which Lincoln was more or less conspicuous and is elsewhere described in these pages.

Herndon never gave utterance to a more truthful declaration than when he contended that as a lawyer and politician Lincoln was both profound and successful, but that in certain other respects he was proportionately weak; and by that he doubtless meant that it was as an inventor and lecturer that he failed to measure up to the required standard. Lincoln's desire to test his skill and ability on the lecture platform did not manifest itself until after his

debate with Douglas in 1858. In its issue of February 14, 1859, the "Springfield Journal" contains this announcement: "Mr. Lincoln delivered a lecture at Jacksonville last Friday night on the subject of 'Discoveries and Inventions.' It was received with repeated and hearty bursts of applause." On the editorial page of the "Jacksonville Sentinel" this notice appeared: "Hon. Abraham Lincoln delivered a lecture on last Friday evening before one of the literary societies of the pupils of Illinois College; subject, 'Discoveries and Inventions.' We learn that the lecturer drew largely from his fund of spicy anecdotes and the lecture proved highly entertaining."

The late William Jayne, who was one of the founders of the Phi Alpha Society before whom the lecture was delivered at Jacksonville, told me that the audience was small and the receipts at the door proportionately disappointing, a fact that Mr. Lincoln could not fail to note. When the committee, after the lecture, met him, he relieved their embarrassment, saying: "Don't be discouraged, boys. Pay my railroad fare and fifty cents for my supper at the hotel and we'll call it square." A few days later this item appeared in the "Springfield Journal": "Hon. A. Lincoln will lecture before the Springfield Library Association at Concert Hall Monday night February 21st 7.30 o'clock. Admission twenty five cents. Geo. S. Roper, Cor. Sec." — accompanied by the following editorial mention: "It will be seen by notice in another column that the gentleman lectures before the Library Association at Concert Hall this evening. Let one and all compliment him with a full audience. His lecture we are assured will be an intellectual feast."

Beyond the above items the papers of the period contain no further mention of the lecture enterprise. That it did not awaken any unusual degree of public interest or approval and probably failed even to meet Mr. Lincoln's expectations is demonstrated by a letter written by him, March 28, 1859, to a friend in a near-by town in which he says: "Your note inviting me to deliver a lecture at Galesburg received. I regret to say I cannot do so now; I must stick to the courts awhile. I read a sort of lecture to three different audiences last month and this; but I did so under different circumstances which made it a waste of no time whatever." In response to another invitation he writes, April 16, 1859: "Yours of the 13th is just received. My engagements are such that I cannot at any very early day visit Rock Island to deliver a lecture or for any other object."

The truth gradually dawned on Lincoln, and he soon realized that of his many and varied accomplishments lecturing was not one of them; so also concluded many of his friends and professional associates. Some of them, including David Davis and Leonard Swett, the latter of whom told me of the circumstance, ventured to prod him about it, but fearing that he might be sensitive over it they soon desisted. Henry C. Whitney told me that on one occasion he was emboldened to joke with Lincoln about the lecture, but the latter interrupted him, saying good-naturedly, "Don't, Whitney; that plagues me." Herndon told me that he went to Concert Hall in Springfield and listened to Lincoln when he delivered the lecture, and remembered vividly the day before when he was preparing it at the office, noting down various items on stray pieces of

paper which were folded and reposed in one of his pockets or found an equally convenient lodgment inside his hat. The whole was finally put into connected manuscript form which he read. As a whole it was in some respects commonplace, and so unlike Lincoln that it failed to draw from his friends the endorsement or applause which he so anxiously awaited. Realizing that he would not be classed among the stars of the Lyceum he soon disappeared from the field. "If Lincoln's address over the death of Clay in 1852," said Herndon, "demonstrated that he was not a eulogist, his effort at Concert Hall in Springfield a few years later proved that he was not a lecturer."

Before I pass from the subject, and in order the reader may be his own judge of Lincoln's fitness and aptitude as a platform speaker, I venture to set out here a few pertinent facts regarding his effort on "Discoveries and Inventions" together with a portion of the lecture itself copied from the original manuscript. The latter paper belonged to the late Dr. Samuel H. Melvin, a former resident of Springfield who removed to California and died there in 1898. Shortly before his death, in explanation of how he came into possession of the manuscript he made the following statement:

"In the month of February, 1861, being at that time a resident of Springfield, Illinois, I called one evening at the residence of my friend John Todd, who was an uncle of Mrs. Abraham Lincoln. While there Mr. Lincoln came in bringing with him a well-filled satchel, remarking as he set it down that it contained his literary bureau. He remained fifteen or twenty minutes conversing mainly about the details of his prospective trip to Washington the following

week, and told us of the arrangement agreed upon by the family to follow him a few days later. When about to leave he handed the grip to Mrs. Grimsley, the only daughter of Dr. Todd, remarking as he did so that he would leave the bureau in her charge; that if he ever returned to Springfield he would claim it, but if not she might make such disposition of its contents as she deemed proper." (Here follows a brief account of Mr. Lincoln's assassination, over four years later, coupled with the announcement that Dr. Melvin was chosen a member of the committee of twelve Springfield citizens sent to Washington to accompany home the remains of the late President.) "A few days after the body was laid to rest," continued Dr. Melvin, "I again called upon my neighbors, the family of Dr. Todd-Scenes and incidents connected with the assassination of the dead President were discussed and the remark made by Mr. Lincoln on his last visit to the house was referred to as indicating a presentiment that he would not return alive. This recalled the fact of his having left his so-called literary bureau and his injunction as to its disposition. Mrs. Grimsley brought the grip from the place where it had been stored and opened it with a view to examining its contents. Among them was found the manuscript and attached to it by means of a piece of red tape was another of like character. They proved to be the manuscripts of two lectures which he had prepared and delivered within a year prior to his election to the presidency — one at Jacksonville and a few days later at Decatur, the other at a hall in Springfield at which I was present. Mrs. Grimsley told me to select from the contents of the bureau any one of the manuscripts it contained; and supposing at that time

[redacted]

~~Bees, and ants, &c. build houses, but they build no better now, than they did five thousand years ago. Ants, and bees, lay up their winter stocks of provision, but they do so, no better, or less laboriously, than they did in the days of creation.~~ Man is not the only animal who labors: but he is the only one who improves his workmanship. This improvement he effects by Discoveries, and Inventions. His first important discovery was the fact that he was naked: and his first invention was the fig-leaf apron. This simple article—the apron—made of leaves, seems to have been the origin of clothing—the one thing for which nearly half of the toil and care of the human race has ever since been expended. The most important improvement ever made in connection with clothing, was the invention of spinning and weaving. The spinning jenny, and power-loom, invented in modern times, though great improvements, do not, as inventions, rank with the ancient arts of spinning and weaving. Spinning and weaving brought into the department of clothing such abundance and variety of material—Wool, the hair of several species of animals, hemp, flax, cotton, silk, and perhaps other articles, were all suited to it, affording garments not only adapted to wet and dry, heat and cold, but also susceptible of high degrees of ornamental finish. Exactly when, or where spinning and weaving originated is not known. At the first interview of the Almighty with Adam and Eve after the fall, He made "coats of skins, and clothed them." Gen. 3-21.

PAGE OF LINCOLN'S MANUSCRIPT OF HIS LECTURE "DISCOVERIES AND INVENTIONS"

that the two manuscripts belonged to the same lecture I selected them. On subsequent examination I discovered that while they both treated on the same subject (Discoveries and Inventions) they were separate lectures. Twenty-five years later I disposed of one of the manuscripts to Mr. C. F. Gunther, of Chicago. The other, it is my hope and desire, shall remain in possession of my family and its descendants."

Which one of the two manuscripts mentioned by Dr. Melvin contains the text of the Springfield lecture delivered by Mr. Lincoln no one at this day seems to be able to determine. The manuscript sold to Mr. Gunther has already been published and what follows is copied from the other one:

Beavers and musk-rats build houses but they build no better ones than they did five thousand years ago. Ants and honey-bees lay up their winter stock of provisions but they do so no wise better or less laboriously than they did at the dawn of creation. Man is not the only animal who labors; but he is the only one who *improves* his *workmanship*. This improvement he effects by *Discoveries and Inventions*. His first important discovery was the fact that he was naked; and his first invention was the fig-leaf apron. This simple article the apron — made of leaves, seems to have been the origin of *clothing* — the one thing for which nearly half of the toil and care of the human race has ever since been expended. The most important improvement ever made in connection with clothing was the invention of *spinning and weaving*. The spinning jenny and power-loom, invented in modern times though great *improvements* do not *as inventions rank* with the ancient arts of spinning and weaving. Spinning and weaving brought into the department of clothing such abundance and variety of material. Wool, the hair of several species of animals, hemp, flax, cotton, silk and perhaps other articles were all suited to it, affording garments not only adapted to wet and dry, heat and cold, but also susceptible of

high degrees of ornamental finish. Exactly *when* or *where* spinning and weaving originated is not known. At the first interview of the Almighty with Adam and Eve after the fall He made "coats of skin and clothed them" (Gen. 3:21).

The discovery of the properties of *iron* and the making of *iron tools* must have been among the earliest of important discoveries and inventions. We can scarcely conceive the possibility of making much of anything else without the use of iron tools. Indeed an iron *hammer* must have been very much needed to make the *first* iron hammer with. A *stone* probably served as a substitute. How could the "*gopher wood*" for the Ark have been gotten out without an axe? It seems to me an axe or a miracle was indispensable. Corresponding with the prime necessity for iron we find at least one very early notice of it. Tubal-Cain was "an instructor of every artificer in *brass* and *iron*" (Gen. IV: 22). Tubal-Cain was the seventh in descent from Adam; and his birth was about one thousand years before the flood. After the flood frequent mention is made of *iron* and *instruments* made of iron.

As man's *food* — his first necessity — was to be derived from the vegetation of the earth it was natural that his first care should be directed to the assistance to that vegetation. And accordingly we find that even before the fall, the man was put into the garden of Eden "to dress it and to keep it." And when afterwards, in consequence of the first transgression, *labor* was imposed on the race as a *penalty* — a *curse* — we find the first born man — the first heir of the curse — was a "tiller of the ground." This was the beginning of agriculture; and although both in point of time and of importance it stands at the head of all branches of human industry it has derived less direct advantage from Discovery and Invention than almost any other. The plow, of very early origin; and reaping and threshing machines, of modern invention are, at this day, the principal improvements in agriculture. And even the oldest of these, the plow, could not have been conceived of until a precedent conception had been caught and put into practice — I mean the conception or idea of substituting other forces in nature for man's own muscular power. These other forces, as now used, are principally the *strength* of animals and the *power* of the wind, of running streams and of steam.

Of all the forces of nature, I should think the *wind* contains the largest amount of *motive power* — that is power to move things. Take any given space of the earth's surface — for instance Illinois; and all the power exerted by all the men and beasts and running water and steam over and upon it shall not equal the one hundredth part of what is exerted by the blowing of the wind over and upon the same space. And yet it has not so far in the world's history become proportionately valuable as a motive power. It is an *untamed* and *unharnessed* force; and quite possibly one of the greatest discoveries hereafter to be made will be the taming and harnessing of it. That the difficulties of controlling this power are very great is quite evident by the fact that they have already been perceived and struggled with more than three thousand years; for that power was applied to sail-vessels, at least as early as the time of Isaiah.

The advantageous use of *Steam-power* is, unquestionably, a modern discovery. And yet, as much as two thousand years ago the power of steam was not only observed, but an ingenious toy was actually made and put in motion by it at Alexandria in Egypt. What appears strange is, that neither the inventor of the toy, nor any one else, for so long a time afterwards, should perceive that steam would move *useful* machinery as well as a toy.

The criticism of Herndon that Lincoln's lecture was a commonplace effort and in some respects beneath the latter's standard of excellence is hardly warranted and may not after all have been strictly in accordance with his original estimate. It is possible Herndon may have cherished the idea that he could surpass Lincoln's effort — in fact, there is evidence that he was so pleased with his partner's success and confident of his own ability in the same line that he decided to venture upon the platform himself. Accordingly in the number of the "Springfield Journal" issued March 15, 1860, appeared this item:

W. H. Herndon will lecture before the Springfield Library Association at Cook's Hall this evening. His subject will be

"The Sweep of Commerce." He will no doubt handle it in an able manner. Let there be a large audience, for the treasury of the Library Association is not quite full and every twenty-five-cent piece left at the door of the hall this evening will be so much clear gain to the association.

The character and extent of the people's response to Herndon's effort is indicated by the following editorial in the next day's "Journal":

The lecture by Mr. Herndon at Cook's Hall last night was altogether too good for the size of the audience which did not number one hundred persons. The subject of the lecture was "The Sweep of Commerce" and ample justice was done to it by the talented lecturer. We cannot close our eyes to the fact that a generous outpouring of people gathered night before last to hear Lola Montez, a woman who has violated every known rule of life, mocked the sacredness of the marriage relation and publicly set at naught all that is beautiful and modest in womankind. The lecture by Mr. Herndon was for the most part historic and could not fail to interest all, and when the lecturer indulged in anticipations of the future or moralized on the past it was in the clear and comprehensive view of a man who has studied well his subject and shown himself capable both to please and interest.

CHAPTER XVIII

An epoch in Lincoln's life — His political baptism — Signs the call for the Bloomington Convention — Herndon's account of the incident — How Stuart tried to retard him — Lincoln announces himself — His speech at the Bloomington Convention — The prediction of Jesse K. Dubois described by Whitney — Lincoln invited to speak in New York — Effect on his neighbors in Springfield — What John T. Stuart said — The Cooper Institute address — His speeches in New England — How he impressed the Eastern people — Mentioned for President by the press — County convention in Springfield endorses him for President — He attends the Decatur meeting where John Hanks brings in the famous rails — Crowds of Lincoln's friends head for Chicago leaving him at Springfield — The Chicago Convention — What Lincoln was doing at home — The nomination on Friday — How Lincoln received the news — The account by Clinton L. Conkling — The effect at Springfield — Marching to Lincoln's house — His speech — Arrival of notification committee from Chicago — Incidents of their visit — The notification ceremony in the parlor of Lincoln's home — Incidents of the campaign — All paths lead to Springfield — The great rally in August — Letter of John Hanks supporting the claims of his cousin Abe Lincoln — Some local campaigners — Herndon's speech at Petersburg — Comments of the local papers.

HAVING devoted more or less space to an account of Mr. Lincoln's activities as a lawyer, lecturer, and inventor, it follows that in order to acquaint the reader with a comprehensive review of the real man, his evolution as a political leader should not be omitted. In the endeavor to arrive at the truth in this regard, however, I shall avoid as fully as I can the repetition of the things with which the public is already familiar and in relating the story of his development view him through the eyes of his neighbors and close friends. This and a retrospect of conditions as reflected in the local press cannot fail to add to the interest of the narrative.

Those who have carefully studied the life of Lincoln will, I believe, agree with his biographers that the year of

1854 marks the beginning of an eventful epoch in his career. We have his own testimony that for a period of five years prior thereto beginning with the close of his only term in Congress in 1849 he had practically forsaken politics and concentrated his energy and masterly ability on the practice of law. And doubtless he would have continued thus politically inactive during the remainder of his days but for a circumstance mentioned in the notes prepared by him for an autobiography in which he makes the sententious declaration that "in 1854 his profession had almost superseded the thought of politics in his mind when the repeal of the Missouri Compromise aroused him as he had never been before."

His first decisive and noteworthy utterance after the great bolt from the political sky was the speech at Springfield October 4, 1854, in answer to one by Stephen A. Douglas at the same place the day before. Twelve days later he repeated it at Peoria. On this occasion he wrote it out in full and, fortunately for history, it was published word for word in the Springfield papers. It was a profound and masterly argument. "After the lapse of more than a quarter of a century," wrote one of his biographers, "the critical reader finds it a model of brevity, directness, terse diction, exact and lucid historical statement and full of logical propositions so short and strong as to resemble mathematical axioms. Above all it is pervaded by an elevation of thought and aim that lifts it out of the commonplace of mere party controversy. The main broad current of his reasoning was to vindicate and restore the policy of the fathers of the country in the restriction of slavery. But running through this like a thread of gold was the demon-

stration of the essential injustice and immorality of the system."

It is unnecessary to recount here the various steps by which Lincoln rose to the eminence of political leadership he was destined to attain. He was still but a unit in that great but unorganized army of Whigs and Democrats who, like himself, were aroused by the repeal of the Missouri Compromise. The Republican Party as an organization had not yet come into existence, but events were crystallizing — gradually assuming form and shape. Although the political sea until then had been pervaded by a calm, it was an ominous circumstance, for often a calm is but the precursor of a storm. Lincoln's attitude and conduct at this particular juncture is of the profoundest significance and necessitates the recital of a brief but interesting chapter of history.

Early in the spring of 1856 at the head of its editorial column the "Springfield Journal" carried a notice or proclamation signed by a number of Sangamon County people urging the propriety of a "county convention to be held at Springfield on Saturday, May 24, to appoint delegates to the Bloomington Convention." It made no pretense of representing an organization and nothing was said to indicate the political complexion of those who were to attend the convention beyond the brief declaration that it was to be a gathering of those who were "opposed to the repeal of the Missouri Compromise, opposed to the present Administration, and in favor of Washington and Jefferson." This call, when turned over to the newspaper, bore the signature of one hundred and twenty-nine citizens of Springfield and near-by territory. Among them were two of Lincoln's law

partners and men like William Jayne, James C. Conkling, and Edward L. Baker. The first name on the list was that of Abraham Lincoln followed immediately by William H. Herndon. Being thus so near the head of the list it is manifestly fair that the latter should be allowed to give his version of the episode as follows:

"Tossed about with the disorganized elements that drifted together after the angry political waters had subsided, it became apparent to Mr. Lincoln that if he expected to figure as a leader he must take a stand himself. Mere hatred of slavery and opposition to the injustice of Kansas-Nebraska legislation was not all that was required of him. I ventured to warn him against his apparent inaction, seeing that the needs of the hour were so pressing, insisting that he must be a Democrat, a Know-Nothing, or Republican, or forever float about on the sea without a compass, rudder, or sail; but about the only response I could evoke was that I was 'too rampant and spontaneous.' At length, however, he decided to declare himself, and it came about in this way: Believing the times were ripe for more advanced movements in the spring of 1856 I drew up a paper for the friends of freedom to sign calling a county convention in Springfield to select delegates to the forthcoming Republican State Convention in Bloomington. The paper was freely circulated and generously signed. Lincoln was absent from town at the time and, believing I knew what his feeling and judgment on the vital questions of the hour was, I took the liberty of signing his name to the call. The whole was then published in the 'Springfield Journal.' No sooner had it appeared than John T. Stuart, who, with others, were endeavor-

THE JOURNAL.

SPRINGFIELD:

FRIDAY EVENING, MAY 16, 1856.

To the Citizens of Sangamon County.

The undersigned, citizens of Sangamon county, who are epposed to the Repeal of the Missouri Compromise, and who are opposed to the present Administration, and who are in favor of restoring the administration of the General Government to the Policy of Washington and Jefferson, would suggest the propriety of a County Convention, to be held in the City of Springfield, on SATURDAY, the TWENTY-FOURTH day of MAY, 1856, to appoint Delegates to the Bloomington Convention.

A Lincoln	J A Dikeman	E R Wiley
Wm H Herndon	Nicholas Dunnuck	S B Moody
Z A Enos	Oliver P Hall	P L Harrison
N W Matheny	J N Fullinwider	M O Reeves
John Irwin	William Henricks	Wm H Boyd
Walter Davis	James Jamison	Jas Wier
Pascal P Enos	David Hall	S M Parsons
W H Bailhache	Allen Hall	S S Sabin
E L Baker	E T Dikeman	Frank Hoppin
William Jayne	James McBride	Dan'l Hoppin
Geo W Chatterton	J G Elkin	W S Pickrell
J D Harper	Thos S Kizer	P Van Bergen
Thomas M Helm	A T Thompson	Geo Pasfield
E B Hawley	J A Jenkins	W Fisher
S F Paden	Morris Bird	A Y Ellis
Fred I Dean	J B Fosselman	A J Ashton
Amos Camp	H W Owen	P Breckenridge
J A Hough	J A Mason	Thos Cantrall
H B Grubb	Chas Fisher	W L Gookins
Geo A Black	A H Saunders	A A McQuesten
J B McCandless	Elijah Tomlinson	Job Flesher, jr.
A E Constant	D Humphreys	L S Conant
J R Mingle	J R Saunders	Jay Slater
John Ranson	J L Lanterman	John Smith
Joseph W Arnold	J C Planck	J Cantrall
Sam'l Cunningham	Alfred A North	S B Fisher
E R Ulrich	Charles Dunn	Grover Ayers
David A Martin	A W French	Wm Perce
Geo S Roper	J A McCandless	Hal Reily
H Post	R J McCandless	G Jayne
B Coon	Wm S Wallace	G A Sutten
Isaac A Hawley	S T Logan	John Cook
A J Sell	Rob Irwin	J W Moffett
R Churchill	C Birchall	C C Brown
S C Whitney	Wm F Elkin	B Moore
A M Watson	William Butler	Jno W Weber
T S Little	Jas C Conkling	George R Weber
J A Pickrell	Jno Williams	Jacob Lewis
W Hathaway	B P Fox	A H Lanphear
Enos Bradley	Joseph Thayer	E C Matheny
Elisha Dunnuck	P C Canedy	Thos J Knox
Alex Armstrong	S Smith	John Armstrong
B Turley	A Millington	John Branson

ing to retard Lincoln in his advanced ideas, rushed into the office and asked if Lincoln had 'signed that Abolition call in the Journal.' I answered in the negative, but added that I had signed his name myself. To the question, 'Did Lincoln authorize you to sign it?' I returned an emphatic 'No.' 'Then,' exclaimed the indignant Stuart, 'you have ruined him!' But I was by no means alarmed at what others deemed inconsiderate and hasty action. I thought I understood Lincoln thoroughly, but in order to vindicate myself if assailed I sat down, after Stuart had rushed out of the office, and wrote Lincoln, who was then in Tazewell County attending court, a brief account of what I had done and how much stir it was creating among his friends and others at home. If he approved of my course I asked him to telegraph or write me at once. In due time came the answer: 'All right; go ahead. Will meet you — radicals and all.' Stuart subsided; and the pretended conservative spirits in and about Springfield no longer claimed to control the political fortunes of Abraham Lincoln."

It would be next to impossible to trace the development of Lincoln as a politician without some account of the Republican State Convention at Bloomington May 29, 1856, referred to in a previous paragraph. Descriptive of this great meeting Herndon once said: "The convention adopted a platform ringing with strong anti-Nebraska sentiment and there gave the Republican Party its official christening. The business of Convention being over, Mr. Lincoln, in response to the repeated calls, came forward and delivered a speech of such earnestness and power that no one who heard it will ever forget the effect it produced. I have heard or read all of Mr. Lincoln's great speeches,

but I give it as my opinion that the Bloomington speech was the grand effort of his life. Heretofore he had simply argued the slavery question on grounds of policy — the statesman's grounds — never reaching the question of the radical and the eternal right. Now he was newly baptized — freshly born; he had the fervor of a new convert; the smothered flame broke out; enthusiasm unusual to him blazed up; his eyes were aglow with an inspiration; he felt justice; his heart was surcharged with sympathy and he stood before the throne of the eternal Right. His speech was full of fire and energy and force; it was logic; it was pathos; it was justice, equity, and truth. I attempted for about fifteen minutes, as was usual with me, to take notes, but at the end of that time I threw my pen and paper away and lived only in the inspiration of the hour. If Lincoln was six feet four usually, he was seven feet high at Bloomington that day and inspired at that. From that day to the day of his death he stood firm in the right. He felt his great cross, had his great idea, nursed it, kept it, taught it to others, in his fidelity bore witness of it to his death, and finally sealed it with his precious blood."

Being admonished that his account of Lincoln's speech, in the opinion of some persons, appeared unusually graphic if not overdrawn, Herndon answered: "The description was used by me in a lecture in 1866 and to some persons may seem more or less vivid if not extravagant in imagery, but, although more than twenty years have passed since it was written, I have never seen the need of altering a single sentence. I still adhere to the truthfulness of the scene as originally depicted."

In my travels through Illinois I have met and talked with

many persons who heard Lincoln's Bloomington speech. They included Leonard Swett, Joseph Medill, David Davis, and Henry C. Whitney, and all agreed that it was a wonderful and memorable effort. I was much impressed by Whitney's recollection. He said that soon after the speech, as he descended the stairway from the convention hall, Jesse K. Dubois, of Lawrence County, Illinois, who had just been nominated State Auditor, caught him by the arm and exclaimed: "Whitney, that is the greatest speech ever made in Illinois and puts Lincoln on the track for the presidency." A little later Whitney caught up with Lincoln, who was on his way to the residence of Judge David Davis, where both were guests, and told him what Dubois had said. "He walked along for a few moments," related Whitney, "without saying a word, but with a thoughtful, abstracted look; then he straightened up and made a remark about some commonplace subject having no reference to the matter we had been discussing. Did he recognize in this burst of enthusiasm from Dubois the voice of destiny summoning him to the highest responsibility on earth? If so, well for him was it that he did not also see the towering granite tomb only nine years distant, consecrated by a flood of human tears."

No single factor, however, did so much to strengthen Lincoln or rather to promote his fortunes as the speech he delivered at Cooper Institute in New York, February 26, 1860. When it became known in Springfield that he had been invited to speak in New York, it occasioned unwonted surprise. Inviting a man of no more pretensions than Lincoln, hailing from a place as obscure as Springfield, to deliver an address before a cultured audience in

the great metropolis was indeed an extraordinary and unusual occurence. No wonder Lincoln ordered a new suit of clothes for the occasion. Comments were numerous and varied. The following which appeared February 23, 1860, in the "Illinois State Register," the Democratic organ in Springfield, shows what Lincoln's political adversaries at his home thought of him as a lecturer:

Significant: The Hon. Abraham Lincoln departs to-day for Brooklyn under an engagement to deliver a lecture before the Young Men's Association in that city in Beecher's church. Subject: not known. Consideration: $200 and expenses. Object: presidential capital. Effect: disappointment.

As a rule the people of Springfield were loyal to Mr. Lincoln, applauded his efforts, and rejoiced in his success. There were, of course, a few exceptions. John T. Stuart, unfortunately, was one. Recalling Lincoln's lecture at Concert Hall the year before, which he characterized as a weak effort, Stuart predicted indifference and scant attention as Lincoln's portion, whenever he undertook to entertain a New York audience: "All of which," contended Herndon, "simply shows how envious Stuart really was of Lincoln's success and faith in himself."

That the Cooper Institute address made an early and profound impression on the majority of the people of Lincoln's home town as well as elsewhere is proved by the "Springfield Journal," which, in its issue of March 7, 1860, publishes the address as it appeared in the New York papers. "We present herewith," says the "Journal" editorially, "a very full and accurate report of Mr. Lincoln's Cooper Institute speech; yet the tones, the gestures, the kindly eye, and mirth-provoking look defy the reporter's

skill. . . . No man ever before made such an impression on his first appeal to a New York audience." In a later issue of the "Journal" attention is paid to the speeches made by Mr. Lincoln in New England, whither he had gone to visit his son Robert who was attending school at Exeter, New Hampshire. He spoke at numerous places in New Hampshire, Rhode Island, and Connecticut. "He indulges in no flowers of rhetoric, no eloquent passages," says the Manchester, New Hampshire "Mirror." "For the first half-hour, his opponents would agree with every word he uttered; and from that part he began to lead them off cunningly, little by little, till he seems to have gotten them all into his fold. He displays more shrewdness, more knowledge of the masses of mankind than any other public speaker we have had since Long Jim Wilson left for California." The "New York Tribune" on March 13th said: "Mr. Lincoln spoke on Friday at Norwich, Conn., and on Saturday at Bridgeport, whence he came by the night express to this city, attending the churches of Drs. Beecher and Chapin yesterday. He leaves this morning by way of the Erie Railroad, having spoken once in New England for every secular day since his address in this city two weeks ago. He has done a good work and made many friends during his visit."

The publication in an Ohio paper in November, 1858, of an editorial announcement favoring the nomination of Lincoln for President must have awakened similar utterances elsewhere, for no later than April, 1859, Lincoln in a letter to an Illinois friend, who had endorsed him for President, felt impelled to arrest the movement in his behalf, saying: "I must in candor say I do not think myself

fit for the presidency. I certainly am flattered and gratified that some partial friends think of me in that connection; but I really think it is best for our cause that no concerted effort, such as you suggest, should be made."

Early in January, 1860, a long letter by a New York traveler appeared in the "Springfield Journal" in which the writer recorded his observations as he made his way over the country, claiming to have interviewed merchants, mechanics, and farmers everywhere, and instead of a pretended sentiment in Seward's behalf he reported a decided leaning toward Lincoln as the best and most available man for President. A few days later the "Central Illinois Gazette" came out in a ringing editorial endorsement of Lincoln. Meanwhile the Cooper Institute speech intervened, whereupon the "Jacksonville Journal," "Iroquois Republican," "Rock Island Gazette," "Menard Index," and other papers of like standard in Illinois joined the Lincoln column.

The first public or concerted action by the people of Springfield in support of Mr. Lincoln's presidential aspirations took place April 28, 1860. A few days earlier the Republican State Central Committee had issued a call for a State Convention to be held at Decatur May 9, 1860, signed by N. B. Judd, E. L. Baker, George T. Brown, Thomas J. Turner, W. T. Hopkins, N. C. Geer, J. Grimshaw, William H. Herndon, C. D. Hay, D. K. Green, D. L. Phillips, and Jesse W. Fell. The Republicans of Sangamon County promptly met in convention and selected the following delegates from Mr. Lincoln's home: Noah W. Matheney, William H. Herndon, John G. Nicolay, George R. Webber, and William Jayne. The following resolution was adopted:

"Resolved that our distinguished fellow-citizen, the tall pioneer of Sangamon County, Abraham Lincoln, is our first choice for President of the United States and that we deem ourselves honored to be permitted to testify our personal knowledge in every-day life as friends and neighbors, of his inestimable worth as a private citizen, his faithful and able discharge of every public trust committed to his care and the extraordinary natural gifts and brilliant attainments which have not only made his name a household word in the prairie state, but also made him the proud peer of the ablest jurists, the wisest statesmen and the most eloquent orators in the Union."

Scenes and events in Lincoln's life now began to unfold with surprising rapidity. In a few days followed the Decatur Convention made famous by John Hanks with his picturesque railsplitting interruption. Within a week the hosts had gathered at Chicago for the memorable tournament there. With the proceedings of the convention itself the world is familiar, and the varied and dramatic incidents have so vividly been portrayed by others I can hope to add but little to what has long since been recorded regarding it. Lincoln's attitude and connection therewith alone merit our attention.

The two men in that convention on whose counsel and judgment Lincoln probably placed the most implicit reliance were David Davis and Stephen T. Logan. The Illinois delegation, of course, were united and enthusiastic in their support. It was their plan to secure for him the votes of Indiana and Pennsylvania; and it has been asserted that the same was accomplished by David Davis on the promise of a cabinet portfolio for a man from each of

those States; but whether true or not it developed that both States fell into line for Lincoln at the proper time.

The convention opened Wednesday, May 16, 1860. Lincoln was present at the Decatur Convention the previous week, but he refrained from going to Chicago. Instead he remained in Springfield going about his business as usual. It is a matter of history vouchsafed by Herndon, who was with the Springfield delegation gathered in Chicago, that Lincoln sent word to them by the hand of E. L. Baker, editor of the "Springfield Journal," directing Davis, and others in charge of his interests, to refrain from making any deals or agreements, as he was determined he would not be bound. Beyond this injunction there is no evidence that he communicated further with them or otherwise sought to restrict their action. Attention has been called to a letter, recently discovered, written by Mr. Lincoln a few days before the Chicago Convention, addressed to a delegate from Indiana, C. M. Allen, of Vincennes, asking him to await the arrival of David Davis and Jesse K. Dubois before deciding on any line of policy to be followed by him at the convention. A day later Lincoln wrote a letter to R. M. Corwine, saying: "I think the Illinois delegation will be unanimous for me at the start, and no other delegation will. A few individuals in other delegations would like to go for me at the start, but may be restrained by their colleagues. It is represented to me by men who ought to know that the whole of Indiana might *not be difficult to get.*" And there are people who pretend to believe that Lincoln was a novice in political methods; that he sat still in his Springfield office, folded his hands, looked up at the ceiling, and, without manifest-

ing the least interest in the developments of his own cause, suffered things to drift along heedless of what might befall him!

The delegates-at-large from Illinois in the Chicago Convention were Norman B. Judd, of Chicago; Gustavus Koerner, of Belleville; David Davis, of Bloomington; and Orville H. Browning, of Quincy. The two delegates representing the Sixth District, which included Sangamon County — in which Lincoln lived — were Stephen T. Logan, of Springfield, and N. M. Knapp, of Winchester. The following letter was written by Knapp after he had reached Chicago. It was addressed to Lincoln and served to indicate how things appeared to his friends gathered at the convention and what they were planning to do in his behalf:

TREMONT HOUSE — CHICAGO
Monday, May 14, 1860

DEAR SIR:

Things are working; keep a good nerve — be not surprised at any result — but I tell you your chances are not the worst. We have got Seward in the attitude of the representative Republican of the East — you at the West. We are laboring to make you the second choice of all the delegations we can, where we can't make you first choice. We are dealing tenderly with the delegates taking them in detail and making no fuss. Be not too expectant, but rely upon our discretion. Again I say brace your nerves for any result.

Truly your friend
N. M. KNAPP

On Friday, May 18th — four days after the above letter was written — the nomination took place. Meanwhile we can well understand that if not a deeply engrossed man

Lincoln was certainly a very nervous and restless one. On a vacant lot south of the building which housed the office of the "Springfield Journal," John Carmody had leveled and smoothed the surface of the ground and maintained there a ball alley — a place where the lawyers sought amusement and exercise by playing at "fives" — a game in which the contestants would throw a ball against a brick wall and catch it when it rebounded, also known as hand-ball. The game was to keep the ball going. If the player failed to catch it on the rebound, he lost a point, and twenty-one points constituted the game. William Donnelly, a boy employed by Carmody, had charge of the alley, kept the floor in proper condition and collected the fees. Several years ago I visited Donnelly, then living in Springfield, and interviewed him regarding the enterprise. Lincoln, he said, was very fond of the game and was one of the most active and skillful players; his success being due to his agility and large hands, enabling him to catch the ball almost every time. Donnelly reported that during the week of the Chicago Convention Mr. Lincoln was about the place a good deal, indulging freely in the game.

In view of the numerous and varied accounts which have been written detailing Lincoln's activities during the week of the Chicago Convention, including descriptions of how and where he received the news of his nomination and his movements generally, the statement which follows is of undoubted interest and value. It is copied from the original notes of an interview with Mr. E. L. Baker, the editor of the "Springfield Journal," who accompanied the Springfield delegation to Chicago, and was put in writing by Mr. Herndon in July, 1865. Mr. Baker left Chicago

before the convention was over, reaching Springfield early in the morning of the day the balloting took place:

"Baker, editor, said: 'Lincoln marked 3 passages in Mo. Democrat, directing me to show same to Davis and the others. I left Chicago on night train; arrived here (Springfield) in morning before balloting began. Met Lincoln and we went to ball alley to play at fives — alley was full — said it was pre-engaged; then went to excellent beer saloon near by to play game of billiards; table was full and we each drank a glass of beer; then went to Journal office expecting to hear result of ballot; waited awhile, but nothing came and finally we parted; I went to dinner. Logan had in his pocket letter of Lincoln authorizing withdrawal of name on conditions.' "

A further account of Lincoln's demeanor and bearing on the day of his nomination — a carefully worded and trustworthy version of the episode — has been prepared by the late Clinton L. Conkling, of Springfield. He and George M. Brinkerhoff, referred to in his statement, were in the company of Lincoln and heard him talk a few moments before the receipt of the telegram apprising him of his nomination. My acquaintance with the gentlemen, both of whom I had frequently visited at their respective abodes, convinced me they were in perfect accord in their recollection of the event. Mr. Conkling's account, as prepared by him to be read before the Illinois State Historical Society in 1909, is as follows:

"On Friday morning, May 18, 1860, the third day of the Chicago Convention, the delegates met at ten o'clock to ballot. James C. Conkling, of Springfield, who had been in Chicago several days, but was called back unexpectedly,

arrived home early that morning. George M. Brinkerhoff of this city was reading law in Mr. Conkling's office which was then over Chatterton's jewelry store. About half-past eight Mr. Lincoln came into the office and asked Mr. Brinkerhoff where Mr. Conkling was, as he had just heard on the street that the latter had returned from Chicago. On being told that Mr. Conkling was not in, but would be in an hour, Mr. Lincoln left, saying he would soon return, as he was anxious to see Mr. Conkling. Presently Mr. Conkling came in and later Mr. Lincoln again called. There was an old settee by the front window on which were several buggy cushions. Mr. Lincoln stretched himself upon the settee, his head resting on a cushion and his feet over the end. For a long time they talked about the convention. Mr. Lincoln wanted to know what had been done, what Mr. Conkling had seen and learned, and what he believed would be the result. Mr. Conkling replied that Mr. Lincoln would be nominated that day; that after the conversations he had had and the information he had gathered, he was satisfied Seward could not be nominated, for he not only had enemies in other States than his own, but he had enemies at home; that, if Mr. Seward was not nominated on the first ballot, the Pennsylvania delegation and other delegations would immediately go to Mr. Lincoln and he would be nominated.

"Mr. Lincoln replied that he hardly thought this could be possible, and that in case Mr. Seward was not nominated on the first ballot it was his judgment that Mr. Chase, of Ohio, or Mr. Bates, of Missouri, would be the nominee. They both considered that Mr. Cameron, of Pennsylvania, stood no chance of nomination. Mr. Conkling in response

said that he did not think it was possible to nominate any other one except Mr. Lincoln under the existing circumstances, because the pro-slavery part of the Republican Party then in the convention would not vote for Mr. Chase, who was considered an Abolitionist, and the Abolition part of the party then in the convention would not vote for Mr. Bates, because he was from a slave State; and that the only solution of the matter was the nomination of Mr. Lincoln. After discussing the situation at some length Mr. Lincoln arose and said: 'Well, Conkling, I believe I will go back to my office and practice law.' He then left the office.

"I was present during a part of this interview and depend largely for the details of this conversation upon what Mr. Conkling and Mr. Brinkerhoff have told me. In a very few moments after Mr. Lincoln left I learned of his nomination and rushed downstairs after him. I overtook him on the west side of the Public Square before any one else had told him, and to my cry, 'Mr. Lincoln, you're nominated,' he said, 'Well, Clinton, then we've got it'; and took my outstretched hand in both of his. Then the excited crowds surged around him and I dropped out of sight.

"In my possession are five original telegrams received by Mr. Lincoln on the day he was nominated. All are on the Illinois and Mississippi Telegraph Company forms. The first one sent was from the telegraph superintendent, Wilson, and shows signs of haste and bears no date. It reads:

To Lincoln:
You are nominated.
J. J. S. Wilson

"Mr. Pierce, the operator who received this message at Springfield, wrote from Young America, Illinois, under date of June 4, 1860, to Mr. Lincoln saying this was the first message for him announcing the nomination. A moment after this message was sent a messenger boy brought to the main office in Chicago a message addressed simply, 'Abe' and which read: 'We did it. Glory to God! Knapp.' The receiving clerk brought the message to Mr. E. D. L. Sweet, superintendent of the Western Division, calling his attention to the address and also to the expression, 'Glory to God.' Mr. Sweet directed that the words, 'Lincoln, Springfield,' be added and that the message be sent at once. The message was probably the first one to Mr. Lincoln from any person who was actively at work in his behalf in the convention and without doubt was from Mr. N. M. Knapp who wrote the letter of May 14th. The next two telegrams are from J. J. Richards, who was connected with the Great Western Railroad and resided at Naples which was the terminus of the road. The first one was as follows:

May 18 1860

By Telegraph from Chicago,
To ABRAHAM LINCOLN :
You're nominated and elected.
J. J. RICHARDS

"The second read:

You were nominated on the 3rd ballot.
J. J. RICHARDS

"Mr. J. J. S. Wilson followed his first message, probably within a few moments, by another which reads":

May 18 1860

By Telegraph from Chicago
To Hon. A. Lincoln

Vote just announced. Whole No. 466. Necessary to choice 234. Lincoln 354. Votes not stated. On motion of Mr. Evarts of N.Y. the nomination was made unanimous amid intense enthusiasm.

J. J. S. Wilson

The only telegraph wires into Springfield in 1860 were owned and operated by the Illinois and Mississippi Telegraph Company, and were called the Caton lines, after Judge John D. Caton, of Ottawa, Illinois, the president of the company. The principal office of the company was in St. Louis. John James Speed Wilson was superintendent of the Eastern Division, with headquarters at Springfield, and E. D. L. Sweet, of the Western Division, with his office in Chicago. There was only one wire into the Wigwam — the building in which the convention was held in Chicago — and this was connected at the main office with the wire leading to the east. Mr. Wilson was in Chicago during the convention and divided his time between the main telegraph office at the southeast corner of Lake and Clark Streets and the Wigwam. It was before the day of the telephone, so that most of the personal messages from delegates to Illinois points — and that included those to Mr. Lincoln — were sent from the convention hall to the main office of the company by messenger boys.

For the first time in its history the city of Springfield had the honor of sheltering and numbering among its citizens a candidate for President of the United States; and judging by the activities of that period, as chronicled in the local papers, its people deeply appreciated the distinction.

"The news of Mr. Lincoln's nomination," says the "Journal" on Saturday, May 19th, "reached the city shortly after noon yesterday. Arrangements were at once made to fire a salute of one hundred guns and the different bells in the city were rung from five o'clock till sundown. Flags were flying from the State House; Republican Headquarters, and the JOURNAL office; and other evidences of joy were visible in various parts of the city. Many called on Mr. Lincoln at his home to congratulate him personally and a large and enthusiastic crowd assembled at the State House at eight in the evening where speeches were delivered by J. C. Conkling, George R. Webber, and others. An hour later the Young American Band started for the Lincoln residence. Arriving in front of the house the crowd made loud calls for Mr. Lincoln and they were soon gratified by seeing his tall form emerging from his doorway. When the cheering subsided Mr. Lincoln proceeded to make his first speech as a candidate for President."

Unfortunately for us no reporter was present to take down the speech and we must therefore content ourselves with the account of it as published in the local newspaper.

"For appropriateness the speech," observes the "Journal," "was never surpassed. Mr. Lincoln said he did not suppose the honor of such a visit was intended particularly for himself as a private citizen, but rather as the representative of a great party; and in reference to his position on the political questions of the day he referred his numerous and enthusiastic hearers to his previous public letters and speeches. The speech was a perfect model in its way, and the loud applause with which it was greeted shows that it struck the right place in the minds of his hearers. Just

previous to the conclusion of his speech Mr. Lincoln said he would be glad to invite the whole crowd into his house if it were large enough to hold them (A voice: 'We will give you a larger house on the 4th of next March!'), but as it could not contain more than a fraction of those who were in front of it he would merely invite as many as could find room."

Meetings to ratify the Chicago nominations were held on the days following, not only in Springfield, but at other points in Sangamon County, where enthusiastic crowds gathered and listened to speeches by James H. Matheney, William H. Herndon, John H. Littlefield (a law student in Lincoln and Herndon's office), Shelby M. Cullom, William Jayne, and other local orators of like renown.

Two memorable and auspicious events in Lincoln's life took place on Friday. One was his marriage to Mary Todd, November 4, 1842; the other his nomination for President at Chicago, May 18, 1860. On the day following the last-named occurrence, which was Saturday, came the committee from the National Convention to notify Mr. Lincoln of his nomination. They reached Springfield at seven o'clock in the evening from Chicago on a special train of three cars, which, besides the members of the committee, contained numerous other delegates and many of Mr. Lincoln's personal friends. "Upon the arrival of the committee at the Chenery House," says the "Springfield Journal," "cheers were given by the crowd for Governor Morgan, of New York, Frank P. Blair, of Maryland, Governor Boutwell, of Massachusetts, and three cheers and a tiger for the Pennsylvania delegation. From the

hotel the delegation deployed off to the State House where a most enthusiastic Republican meeting, addressed by various distinguished speakers, was kept up to a late hour." The notification committee, meanwhile, after partaking of supper and bountiful refreshments at the hotel, proceeded to the residence of Lincoln. What took place there is so well known it need not be repeated here. An incident or two, however, has been preserved.

Among those who accompanied the delegation from Chicago was Ebenezer Peck, later Clerk of the Supreme Court of Illinois, who had once been a resident of Springfield, was a close friend of Lincoln, and therefore more or less familiar with the latter's social and domestic surroundings. On reaching the hotel Mr. Peck confided to the local people gathered there that, on account of the delay in the arrival of the train and the necessity of departing at an early hour, the committee desired that the least time possible be consumed by the notification ceremony at Lincoln's residence. To that end it was intimated that no ladies were to be invited and that even the presence of Mrs. Lincoln was not expected or, in fact, desired. Being acquainted with the mercurial disposition of Lincoln's wife, Peck called aside several Springfield people whom he knew and suggested that they notify Mrs. Lincoln of the committee's preference so that thus she would take the hint. But it happened that the Springfield people were also familiar with Mrs. Lincoln's peculiar temperament so that when appealed to by Peck they declined to intervene. Instead they admonished him: "Go tell the lady, yourself." Later, when the home on Eighth Street was reached and the committee filed gravely in, the first person they saw

was Mrs. Lincoln dressed in her finest, bedecked with flowers, and graciously awaiting them in the parlor! Whether Mr. Peck had courage enough to deliver the message himself was never known.

A gentleman, who was living in Springfield when these lines were written, told me that he, among others, was consulted by Lincoln regarding the propriety of offering wine to the committee while they were at his house. At first it was deemed appropriate to comply with the custom then in vogue in welcoming and entertaining guests who ranked as high as the members of the notification committee; but later, after some reflection, Lincoln dissented, holding that, as he himself did not drink wine, it could with propriety be omitted in his own house. A few days after the departure of the committee Lincoln encountered the gentleman above mentioned — John W. Bunn — on the street. The latter asked him how his guests took to the cold water he had served to them at his house. "Greatly to my surprise," answered Lincoln, "they drank freely of it and I never knew the reason till one of them confided that they had just come from a sumptuous dinner at the hotel where they were given bountiful quantities of everything to drink but water, so that when they reached my house they were so dry, notwithstanding the refreshments at the hotel, even water was stimulant enough to satisfy their appetites."

In due time the campaign of 1860 was well under way With the dignity becoming his position Mr. Lincoln remained at home supervising his correspondence, receiving visitors, and, in general, managing his campaign. The leading incident — one of absorbing local interest — was

the mammoth meeting at Springfield August 14th, which, in size and character, is graphically portrayed in the headlines of the "Springfield Journal":

A POLITICAL EARTHQUAKE!
THE PRAIRIES ON FIRE FOR LINCOLN
THE BIGGEST DEMONSTRATION
EVER HELD IN THE WEST
75000 REPUBLICANS IN COUNCIL
IMMENSE PROCESSION

Speaking from Five Stands by Trumbull, Doolittle, Kellogg, Palmer, Gillespie, etc.
Magnificent Torch Light Procession at Night.
Meeting at the Wigwam and Representatives Hall.

This was not only Lincoln's first public appearance after the day of his nomination, but also, as described in the local papers, the greatest rally of the campaign. The meeting was at the State Fair Grounds. "The announcement that Mr. Lincoln had arrived on the ground," relates the "Journal," "was the signal for a display of wild enthusiasm the like of which was never before witnessed by an Illinois audience. There was a rush from every stand toward his carriage, which was immediately surrounded by his warm admirers and he was forced almost violently from his vehicle and carried upon the shoulders of the crowd to an impromptu stand where he was called upon for a speech. The huzzas and cheers which greeted him were continued nearly ten minutes without cessation, the uproar being so great he could not make himself heard. When order was

partially restored he thanked his hearers in a brief speech and then descended from the platform. Meanwhile thousands pressed around to take him by the hand, but by an adroit movement he escaped on horseback while the crowd was besieging the carriage in which he was expected to return to the city."

Among other things the campaign was enlivened by a long letter published in the "Decatur Chronicle," written by Lincoln's kinsman John Hanks explaining why he had left the Democratic Party and was then warmly supporting the claims of his cousin Abraham Lincoln for President. No incident of the campaign made a deeper impression on Lincoln. Although John may not have written the letter exactly as printed in the newspaper, it does not follow that he neglected to dictate his ideas to another who possessed the requisite skill to put it into shape for publication. As it was the first and only endorsement of Lincoln's claims from any of his kindred, and as John Hanks was his favorite cousin (the only one, too, he honored with an invitation to his wedding), we can well understand that the latter with its plain logic and frank sentiments afforded Lincoln, as Herndon assured me, the deepest gratification. In view of the fact that Lincoln read the letter when published and was so deeply touched by his cousin's loyal and generous support, a reproduction of a portion of it in this connection may not be without more or less interest. After reciting that from boyhood he had been a supporter of the Democratic Party, Hanks insists that he is but repeating the tactics of Douglas in transferring his support to the Republican Party. Referring to Lincoln he says:

I have known him for more than thirty years. In boyhood days we've toiled together; many are the days we have lugged the heavy oar on the Ohio, the Illinois and the Mississippi Rivers together; many are the long cold days we have journeyed over the wild prairies and through the forest with gun and axe; and though it is now pleasant to refer to it well do I remember when we set out together in the cold winter to cut and maul rails on the Sangamon River in Macon County to enclose his father's little home and from day to day kept at work until the whole was finished and the homestead fenced in. We often swapped work in this way and yet, during the many years we were associated together as laborers sometimes flat-boating, sometimes hog driving, sometimes rail making and, too, when it was nearly impossible to get books he was a constant reader; I was a listener. He settled the disputes of all the young men in the neighborhood and his decisions were always abided by. I never knew a man more honest under all circumstances. Thus associated with Mr. Lincoln I learned to love him and when, in 1858, he was a candidate for the first time within my reach, against my feelings and, I may say, against my convictions my old party ties induced me to vote for Mr. Douglas. My Democratic friends all declared Lincoln was an Abolitionist. I heard him make a speech in Decatur just before the election and I could see nothing bad in it; but I was told by the party he was wrong and yet I did not see how he could be. They said I was a Democrat and must vote that way. My wife used to say to me that some day Abe would come out and be something great; I thought so too but I could not exactly see how a man in the lower walks of life, a day laborer and helplessly poor would ever stand much chance to rise very high in the world.

At last, one day at home, we heard that the Republican State Convention was to be held at Decatur and that they were going for Abe for President. As soon as I found this out I went into town and told a friend of Abe's that great and honest merit was at last to be rewarded in the person of my old friend Mr. Lincoln of the Republican Party. I thought of the hard and trying struggles of his early days and recollecting the rails we had made together thirty years ago made up my mind to present some of them to that convention as a testimonial of the beginning of one of the greatest living men of the age, believing they

would speak more in his praise than any orator could, and honor true labor more than the praise of men or the resolutions of conventions. On our way to get the rails I told the friend of old Abe that if Abe should be nominated for President I would vote for him; everybody knows he has been and I rejoice that I live to give this testimony to his goodness and honesty, and hope I shall live to vote for him for President of the United States next November. Is there anything wrong in this? Who ought to refuse to vote for as good and as great a man as he is? I know that in voting for him I vote with the Republican Party and will be considered as adopting its principles. As I now understand him I see no good reason why I may not do so; our own party is divided and we have no Solomon to tell who shall take the child. Slavery has divided the Democratic Party and nobody can blame Republicanism for the destruction that came upon us at Charleston. Slavery has disunited us — has united the Republican Party, and if there is any good about the question they have it all and we have the trouble. If I understand Mr. Douglas now, he occupies a position on the question just as distasteful to the South as Mr. Lincoln does — with this clear difference; The South seems to understand Mr. Lincoln's position better than his and to respect it a great deal more; and I am convinced that if Mr. Douglas does not reflect the nigger he does the mulatto, and one brings just as much in Mobile as the other and stands as high in the market.

Many of my Democratic neighbors will say I have done wrong; but I know there are many who would do as I have done were it not that they do not feel willing to break away from party ties and encounter the talk of old friends. As long as I have old Abe to lead me I know that I shall never go very far from the right. Should he be elected President and find any trouble in steering his new boat he has only to remember how we used to get out of hard places by rowing straight ahead and never by making short turns. The tallest oaks in the forest have fallen by his giant arms; he still wields a tremendous maul; out of the largest timber he can make the smallest rails. I have seen him try a tough cut and fail once; in the second trial he never failed to use it up. Though not a very beautiful symbol of honesty I think the rail a fitting one and mean to present Abe with one of his own make should he be elected, in the city of

Washington on the day of inauguration to be kept in the White House during his administration.

JOHN HANKS

Illinois and especially Springfield was the storm center of the campaign. Hither came the celebrities from all directions so that the people were privileged to hear most of the great spell-binders of the day including Tom Corwin, Samuel Galloway, Galusha Grow, Carl Schurz, Robert C. Schenck, Leonard Swett, and others of like renown. Most of the meetings in Springfield were held in the Wigwam, a building erected for the purpose, and there Mr. Lincoln would generally be seen, occupying a seat on the platform, or sometimes walking beside the speaker in the parade as it marched down the street. Although a punctual and interested spectator at all the meetings, he invariably declined to make a speech.

There was also great activity among the local campaigners. Herndon was especially ubiquitous and energetic; so also were William Jayne, John H. Littlefield — a law student in Lincoln & Herndon's office — and the lamented Elmer Ellsworth. That Mr. Lincoln was himself not unmindful of their interest and zeal is demonstrated by the following message which he sent to Herndon who was billed to make a speech at Petersburg October 10th, just after the State election in Indiana and Pennsylvania:

SPRINGFIELD, ILLS., Oct. 10, 1860

DEAR WILLIAM:

I cannot give you the details, but it is entirely certain that Pennsylvania and Indiana have gone Republican very largely. Pennsylvania 25,000 and Indiana 5,000 to 10,000. Ohio of course is safe. Yours as ever

A. LINCOLN

This message in Lincoln's handwriting is still in existence having been presented by Herndon to a friend in Chicago who has preserved and allowed me to copy it. "I well remember," related Herndon, "how, in the midst of my speech at Petersburg, a man hurriedly made his way through the crowd and thrust a message into my hand. I was more or less agitated, if not really alarmed, fearing it might contain sad or unwelcome news from my family; but great was my relief when I read it, which I did aloud. It was from Lincoln bidding me to be of good cheer, that Indiana, Pennsylvania, and Ohio had been swept by the Republicans. These were October States and this was the first gun of the campaign. The announcement created so much commotion, such a burst of enthusiasm, that the crowd in their excitement forgot they had a speaker. They ran from the hall and their cheers and yells were so vociferous I never succeeded in finishing my speech."

The incident is thus described in the "Axis," the Democratic organ published in Petersburg October 13, 1860:

> Abraham Lincoln, of whom it has been stated by his private secretary that he was under obligations to his friends not to write or answer any interrogatories lest he should embarrass the canvass, being overjoyed at the intelligence from the late elections has violated the obligation imposed upon him. While Bill Herndon was delivering his tirade of abuse upon the Southerners and Southern institutions at the court-house in this place on Monday evening, he was stopped in the middle of his speech upon the arrival of a special messenger from Springfield (announced by the agent of the U. G. R. R.) bearing a note from the great Abraham himself, heralding a Republican victory of twenty thousand in Pennsylvania, twenty to twenty-five thousand in Ohio, and five to ten thousand in Indiana and closing as follows:
>
> "I send this glorious news to my friends, greeting:
>
> Your friend in haste
>
> A. Lincoln."

Upon this announcement his friends obeyed the summons by round after round of frantic shouts.

In an editorial bearing the headlines: "The Falsities and Fanaticism of Bill Herndon, the Law Partner and Confidant of Mr. Lincoln," the paper continues:

That the heresies and false dogmas of William H. Herndon are traceable to the law office of Mr. Lincoln himself is a sufficient reason why we feel called upon to expose them to the public in order that conservative men of the Republican Party may know whither we are drifting. It had for some time been previously announced that Mr. Herndon would address our citizens upon the political issues of the day and that this would be the ablest speech ever delivered in the town of Petersburg. Accordingly we were present Monday evening and have something to say of the result.

From the seeming insuperable mass of incongruous substances composing the speech of Mr. Herndon we are enabled to collate within the bounds of reasonableness a few of the points having a smattering of argument in them. We shall not attempt to follow him through the dark vaults of his truculent imagination nor to calm the fears of those who become frightened at the gentleman's ghost stories. Presuming upon the faith of our early fathers he has dared to resurrect them in the name of Abraham without offering the divine sacrifice that the people might have disclosed to them the hallowedness of the act.

The news of the Republican victory in the October States produced great enthusiasm especially in Lincoln's home town. A meeting was held at the Wigwam to which a long procession of Wide-Awakes and torchlight bearers made their way after marching over town. They stopped at Lincoln's residence. "Mr. Lincoln," so the "Journal" relates, "stood in his doorway surrounded by a large number of friends and bowed in silent acknowledgment of the deafening cheers, but declined to speak. But



Lyman Trumbull, who was conveniently at hand, made the speech for him, telling the crowd that they must excuse Mr. Lincoln as he was under engagement to address the people at a later date, March 4th, from the eastern portico of the Capitol of Washington."

CHAPTER XIX

Lincoln the candidate for President — Meeting the expenses of the campaign — Judge Logan's plan — The ten friends of Lincoln who contributed — John W. Bunn's story of the fund — John G. Nicolay selected as Lincoln's secretary — Lincoln's attention to the details of the campaign — Meets with local committee — Recommends John Hay as assistant secretary — Interesting reminiscence of John W. Bunn — How Lincoln bore himself throughout the campaign — The election — Lincoln going to the polls — Assigned quarters for his office in the State House — His habits as President elect — Goes to Chicago to meet Hannibal Hamlin — Returns to Springfield — Visitors at his office and incidents of his stay there — Journeys to Charleston to see his stepmother — Account of his visit and interesting reminiscence by James A. Connolly — Returns to Springfield and begins preparations for the journey to Washington — Last visit to his law office — Final interview with Herndon.

INASMUCH as Abraham Lincoln was the first candidate for President that the city of Springfield had ever sheltered there were, therefore, no precedents, indicating the requirements of the occasion, to guide him or his friends. In a worldly sense Lincoln was of limited means, his accumulations after a quarter of a century at the bar never having exceeded ten thousand dollars. He was therefore ill constituted to bear, unaided, the burdensome expenses which a campaign for the presidential office necessarily entailed. That being the case I venture in this connection to give space to a reminiscence of Lincoln I heard in Springfield. It is so illuminative and affords such an insight into Lincoln's personal connection with the campaign of 1860, it cannot well be omitted. It is a recollection of the late John W. Bunn, who was a close friend of Lincoln and one of his political lieutenants in Springfield. The statement written and delivered to me by Mr. Bunn is as follows:

Shortly after Mr. Lincoln's nomination for President in May,



STEPHEN T. LOGAN



JOHN T. STUART

1860, Judge Stephen T. Logan, a warm friend and former law partner of Mr. Lincoln and one who had been active in his political interest, came to me at my brother Jacob Bunn's store, where I was then employed, and reminded me that Mr. Lincoln would necessarily receive a large amount of correspondence which should be attended to promptly and which would require clerical assistance; that prominent Republicans all over the country would be coming to Springfield to visit him; that the entertainment of these gentlemen would be an item of some consequence and that there would be various other expenses incident to the Springfield end of the campaign, all of which Mr. Lincoln, being a man of limited means, could ill afford to bear. Judge Logan then suggested that a fund for that purpose should be provided by Mr. Lincoln's personal friends in Springfield, at the same time handing me his check for five hundred dollars accompanied by a list of nine other friends of Mr. Lincoln including such men as Colonel John Williams, my brother Jacob Bunn, O. M. Hatch, Thomas Condell, and Robert Irwin, each one of whom, he was sure, would be glad to contribute five hundred dollars for a fund for this general purpose. He directed me to act as treasurer of the fund and I at once called on the gentlemen named, obtaining, as predicted, five hundred dollars from each one, thus accumulating the fund of five thousand dollars for the purposes indicated by Judge Logan.

Shortly after this John G. Nicolay, then a clerk in the office of O. M. Hatch, agreed, without compensation, to give such time as he could to attend to Mr. Lincoln's political correspondence. Mr. Hatch was then Secretary of State, and he and the clerks in his office arranged their duties so that Mr. Nicolay might have considerable time at his disposal in connection with Mr. Lincoln's correspondence. In the early part of August a great Republican rally, said to have been attended by seventy-five thousand people, was held at the State Fair Grounds in Springfield. The expenses attendant upon that mammoth gathering of the people consumed the unexpended portion of the five thousand dollars that had been raised. After the rally a meeting of the committee of gentlemen who had contributed the fund was held and each of the original subscribers put in an additional five hundred dollars. Meanwhile Mr. Lincoln's correspondence had so materially in-

creased that Mr. Nicolay found it practically impossible for him to take care of it without assistance. At the meeting of the committee, referred to, the question of procuring an assistant for Nicolay was canvassed. The names of various persons were suggested, but none seemed to possess the peculiar qualifications deemed requisite for one who would necessarily have the responsible duties attending the disposal of Mr. Lincoln's weighty and oftentimes delicate correspondence. Finally Milton Hay suggested that his nephew John Hay, who was studying law in his office, had marked literary talent, decided tact, and was otherwise well equipped to fill the position and that, too, without expense to the committee. Moreover, he contended, it would be an excellent thing for young Hay in the way of practical experience. After due consideration the committee decided to make requisition on John Hay for his services and he immediately took his place beside Mr. Nicolay. The two worked together throughout the remainder of the campaign, disposing of Mr. Lincoln's correspondence which, especially after the election, and until the departure of Mr. Lincoln for Washington, in February, 1861, was very large and important.

Although more or less burdened by the weighty matters that necessarily demanded his attention as a candidate and later President elect, Lincoln in no respect overlooked the details of the campaign. Especially solicitous was he regarding local conditions, including campaign expenses. He relied on Mr. Bunn and repeatedly called on him and certain other discreet friends asking for reports of developments. He insisted that he should be told everything. Mr. Bunn, in his account of Lincoln's campaign expenses, says:

Shortly before he left Springfield, he called a meeting of the committee referred to above in order to close up the various unfinished matters connected with his end of the campaign. It developed that the fund was overdrawn about twenty-five hundred dollars. This I insisted on paying, as I had been responsible

for incurring the deficit. At this meeting Mr. Lincoln said that he had been examining the laws of Congress with reference to Appropriations and found that, as President, he would have at his disposal for secretarial work only the sum of twenty-five hundred dollars per year, all of which amount, he judged, would be required for Mr. Nicolay; that he had found John Hay to be of great assistance and that he hoped after reaching Washington he might find some way of continuing the latter's connection with his personal work. Thereupon Milton Hay said that John Hay had greatly enjoyed working with Mr. Lincoln, and that he, Milton Hay, would provide for John's expenses for six months in Washington. Immediately thereafter Mr. Lincoln requested John Hay to accompany him to Washington in the capacity of Assistant Secretary in conjunction with Mr. Nicolay, which request was duly complied with. During the early years of the war John Hay returned to visit Springfield. He then told me that when Mr. Lincoln received his first month's salary as President he insisted on paying Hay a salary at the rate of three thousand dollars a year.

John W. Bunn, the author of the foregoing reminiscence, emigrated to Springfield from New Jersey about the time Mr. Lincoln was elected to Congress in 1847. His brother Jacob was the leading banker of Springfield and a client of Lincoln's, and he himself was one of the latter's protégés in the development of politics from 1850 to 1860. He and Lincoln were the closest of friends. Some of his recollections bring out characteristics of Lincoln that cannot fail to enlighten us.

In the year of 1857 [he related] Mr. Lincoln asked me one day if I did not wish to run for city treasurer of Springfield. The city was then almost hopelessly Democratic and the proposition rather startled me. He, however, gave me encouragement to believe that I could be elected if I would go about the matter in the right way. My brother, Jacob Bunn, who was present, said to him, "John will run if you want him to." The candidate of

the Democrats was Charles Ridgely. I confess I was pleased with the idea, and when the Republican city convention met I was an interested auditor of the proceedings. I expected to hear my own virtues extolled in the lofty way common in such conventions. Lincoln told me nothing of his plans as to how the announcement of my candidacy would be made or in what manner I would be brought out. The convention was nearly over and I began to think the matter of my nomination had been forgotten. In a city so Democratic as Springfield Republican nominations were regarded at best as rather formal and perfunctory affairs. Near the close of the convention a young man — a lawyer who was an inmate of Lincoln's office — addressed the chairman and said he would like to make a nomination for the office of city treasurer, but that, if the suggestion he should make did not meet with the favor of every delegate present, he would withdraw the name. He then put my name in nomination, but again said: "If there is any delegate on this floor opposed to the candidacy of Mr. Bunn I do not wish his name to be voted upon or to go on the ticket." No one objected and I was nominated by acclamation.

When I saw who was nominating me and knew that he was an inmate of Mr. Lincoln's office, I, of course, knew very well that he was acting under Mr. Lincoln's orders. The result of the election was that I was chosen for treasurer, and I may say I was again chosen in 1858, in 1859, and in 1860. In all these campaigns I was, so to speak, under the political wing of Mr. Lincoln.

A day or two after the first nomination for city treasurer I was going uptown and saw Mr. Lincoln ahead of me. He waited until I caught up and said to me, "How are you running?" I told him I did n't know how I was running. Then he said, "Have you asked anybody to vote for you?" I said that I had not. "Well," said he, "if you don't think enough of your success to ask anybody to vote for you, it is probable they will not do it, and that you will not be elected." I said to him, "Shall I ask Democrats to vote for me?" He said, "Yes, ask everybody to vote for you." Just then a well-known Democrat, named Ragsdale, was coming up the sidewalk. Lincoln said, "Now, you drop back there and ask Mr. Ragsdale to vote for you." I turned and fell in with Mr. Ragsdale, told him of my candidacy, and said I hoped he would

support me. To my astonishment he promised me that he would. Mr. Lincoln walked slowly along and fell in with me again and inquired, "Well, what did Ragsdale say? Will he vote for you?" I answered, "Yes, he told me he would." "Well, then," said Lincoln, "you are sure of two votes at the election, mine and Ragsdale's." This was my first lesson in politics and I received it from a welcome source.

During the time between the election of Mr. Lincoln and his departure from Springfield for Washington he had his office in the old State House. I was, of course, deeply interested in the campaign being a member of a local committee which had charge of matters in Springfield and Sangamon County as well as treasurer of the same.

One day after the election had resulted successfully I went over to Mr. Lincoln's room in the State House, and as I passed up the stairway I met Salmon P. Chase, of Ohio, coming away. When I entered the room I said to Mr. Lincoln, rather abruptly, "You don't want to put that man in your Cabinet, I hope?" It was an impertinent remark on my part, but Mr. Lincoln received it kindly, and replied to me in a characteristic way, by saying, "Why do you say that?" "Because," I answered, "he thinks he is a great deal bigger than you are." "Well," inquired Lincoln, "do you know of any other men who think they are bigger than I am?" I replied, "I cannot say that I do, but why do you ask me that?" "Because," said Mr. Lincoln, "I want to put them all in my Cabinet."

On another occasion, after the campaign was over and I was again in Mr. Lincoln's office, mention was made of the interest and time I had given to the canvass locally. Lincoln asked me some questions which brought out the fact that I had spent a good deal of my own money in the canvass — a thousand dollars or more. Mr. Lincoln suggested that I was not able to lose that money. He spoke very seriously. I replied to him, "Yes, Mr. Lincoln, I am able to lose it because when you have reached Washington you are going to give me an office." The statement seemed to startle him and the look in his face grew very serious. He promptly denied that he had promised me any office whatever. "No, Mr. Lincoln," I replied, "you have not promised me anything, but you are going to give me an office just the same."

"What office do you think I am going to give you?" he asked. "The office of Pension Agent here in Illinois," I exclaimed. "During Isaac B. Curran's term as Pension Agent under Buchanan I have done all the work in the office in order to get the deposits in my brother's bank. The salary amounts to one thousand dollars, and when you go to Washington you are going to give me that office." To this he made no word of reply, and there was therefore no way of determining what effect my prediction made upon him. All I know is that three days after his inauguration as President, Caleb B. Smith, his Secretary of the Interior in Washington, sent to Springfield my commission as Pension Agent.

I do not believe that anything on earth could have exacted a promise from Mr. Lincoln to give me that office; nor do I think he would have bargained to give any man an administrative office before or after his election. It is probable that he selected the members of his Cabinet and that he had advised them of the fact before they were appointed, but outside of his Cabinet officers I do not believe he promised anybody an office before the day of his inauguration, and yet the incident I have above related shows that he was not by any means insensible to ordinary political considerations.

The presidential election of 1860 took place November 6th. "In the morning of that day," relates Herndon, "I dropped in at the office in the State House to see Mr. Lincoln and inquired how and when he expected to cast his vote. At first he questioned the propriety of his voting at all, but, on being reminded of his duty to his friends on the State ticket, he called for a ballot, cut off the names of the presidential electors, and started for the polls. On one side of him walked Ward H. Lamon, on the other side, Elmer Ellsworth, and I immediately in the rear. A goodly number had gathered at the polling-place, and there was more or less cheering when Lincoln appeared, but the crowd very gracefully gave way, many raising their hats,

when he approached the ballot box and handed up his ticket. People forgot their political differences for the time, the Democrats vying with the Republicans in their endeavor to accord the first presidential candidate Springfield ever had proper deference and respect."

Aside from the fact that it resulted overwhelmingly in his favor, but little remains to be said regarding the election of Lincoln beyond what has already been recorded. A few days after the election the following announcement appeared in the "Springfield Journal":

"To-day and until further notice, Mr. Lincoln will see visitors at the Executive Chamber in the State House from 10 to 12 A.M. and from 3.30 to 5.30 P.M. each day."

His own residence being inadequate for the purpose he was now installed in the Governor's room in the State House, which was not used for official business during the period the Legislature was not in session, and here he greeted and received the procession of visitors who daily made their way to his office. "There was free access to him," relate Nicolay and Hay; "not even an usher stood at the door; any one might knock and enter. His immediate personal friends from Sangamon County and central Illinois availed themselves largely of the opportunity. With men who had known him in field and forest he talked over the incidents of their common pioneer experience with unaffected sympathy and interest as though he were yet the flatboatman, surveyor, or village lawyer of early days."

To be known as the President elect was a new experience for Lincoln, but its effect was not apparent, for it in no way wrought any change in his demeanor or attitude toward others. He was as unaffected, as thoughtful, and as

easy of approach as ever. Two weeks after the election, accompanied by his wife, he journeyed to Chicago where he met Hannibal Hamlin, the Vice-President elect. After a visit of several days, which included a reception at the Tremont House, the two separated, Mr. Hamlin departing for Washington and the President elect returning to Springfield. It was the first time Lincoln had been away from his home since his nomination in May. At the reception a line of visitors for two and a half hours moved through the middle parlor of the hotel to the Dearborn Street front, shaking Lincoln's hand. At his right stood Mrs. Lincoln and next Mr. Hamlin. Being very tall, Lincoln had to stoop slightly when shaking hands with people of average height. When one tall man came along Lincoln raised his hand in astonishment and exclaimed: "Well, you're up some, too, are n't you?" The "Chicago Tribune" in its issue of November 27th reports that "Messrs. Lincoln and Hamlin on Sunday attended divine service in company with Congressman I. N. Arnold at St. James's Church on Cass Street, and in the afternoon they visited the North Market Mission where, after the usual services, the President elect delivered a short address which was received with much pleasure by the destitute children attending the Sabbath school."

In due time Lincoln was again in Springfield domiciled in the office assigned to him in the State House in which to receive and listen to the army of visitors destined to call on him before his departure for Washington. The procession was almost endless and from every part of the country. He denied himself to no one. "Among the visitors who called on Mr. Lincoln yesterday," reported

the "Springfield Journal" early in January, 1861, "was an old gentleman dressed in plain homespun clothing who hailed from Mississippi. Mr. Lincoln talked freely with him, explaining that he, the President elect, entertained none but the kindliest feeling toward the people of the South and that he would protect the South in her just rights. The man went away delighted. After he had left Mr. Lincoln's office and stood outside the door, he remarked, while the tears stole down his furrowed cheeks: 'O if the people of the South could but hear what I have listened to, they would love instead of hating Mr. Lincoln. I will tell my friends at home, but,' he added sorrowfully, 'they will not believe me.' He repeated the wish that every man in the South could be personally acquainted with Mr. Lincoln."

A week after this incident one of the Springfield papers reports that "Mr. Lincoln was called upon to-day by an old man from Indiana named Jones for whom thirty years ago he worked as a common farm-hand at a dollar a day," referring to William Jones who kept the store at the village of Gentryville, where Mr. Lincoln spent his boyhood, and who later, as Colonel of the 53d Regiment, Indiana Volunteers, fell at the siege of Atlanta.

The following which appeared in the "Springfield Journal" serves to indicate that events in Mr. Lincoln's career as President elect were rapidly unfolding:

> We had the pleasure yesterday of inspecting the magnificent suit of clothes which has been in course of preparation for Mr. Lincoln since his visit to Chicago. It is manufactured by merchant tailors in Chicago and consists of a dress coat, pants, vest, and cravat. The coat is of the best cloth that can be bought in the country and made up with a taste and in a style that cannot

be bought in any country. The pants are of the best and finest black cassimere; the vest of the finest grandiere silk and lined with buff goods of the same kind. The whole was presented to Mr. Lincoln with the following inscription: "To Hon. Abraham Lincoln from A. D. Titsworth, Chicago, Ills." which is beautifully worked on the inside of the coat collar.

On January 8th Mr. Lincoln attended a joint meeting of both houses of the Illinois Legislature and witnessed the election of Lyman Trumbull to the United States Senate. His presence was the "signal for a demonstration of prolonged applause as he took his seat beside Judge Caton near the Speaker's desk."

That Mrs. Lincoln also was not without interest in the developments of the hour may be gleaned from this announcement which appeared in the "Cleveland Herald" January 10th: "Conductor Ames's train on the Cleveland and Toledo Railroad this morning brought in Mrs. Lincoln, wife of the President elect, accompanied by her brother-in-law, Mr. C. M. Smith, and Hon. Amos Tuck, of New Hampshire. They will proceed to New York by way of Buffalo and, after a few days' stay to make purchases for the White House, will go to Cambridge, Mass., to visit Mr. Lincoln's son who is at Harvard College. Pres. Gardiner tendered the courtesies of the road from Toledo to Cleveland and Supt. Nottingham set apart a special car to take the party to Buffalo."

The time for Lincoln's final departure from Springfield was now rapidly approaching, and although necessarily greatly preoccupied he was not so deeply engaged that he forgot the claims of those who had befriended him before he was either popular or famous. Accordingly, as soon

as his wife returned from her Eastern trip, he tore himself away from the anxious crowd who had so sedulously followed his every movement and journeyed to Coles County, Illinois, to visit his aged stepmother, then living in the country a few miles from the town of Charleston. "He cannot hope to meet her again for several years," records the local paper, "and it is as characteristic of Mr. Lincoln triumphant as Mr. Lincoln defeated that he has always maintained the closest intimacy with all his kindred however humble their fortunes." While there he also paid a visit to the grave of his father. In the evening he rode back to Charleston in company with his aged relative, and, at the urgent request of the citizens, held an impromptu reception in one of the public halls. A large number of the people took advantage of the opportunity to shake him by the hand. Though called upon, Lincoln declined making any remarks shadowing forth his views of the present state of the country or the policy of the coming administration.

I knew and often talked with Augustus H. Chapman, whose wife was a daughter of Dennis Hanks, and who was Lincoln's companion when he drove from Charleston to see his stepmother. "During the ride," related Colonel Chapman, "Mr. Lincoln became more or less reminiscent, adverting frequently to family affairs. He spoke in the most affectionate way of his stepmother, characterizing her as the best friend he ever had. He alluded to the sad, if not pitiful condition of his father's family at the time of the marriage to his stepmother and described the wholesome change in the children due to her encouragement and advice. He also spoke of the campaign of 1860 and the

loyal support of the Union men, dwelling especially on the eloquence and ability of Caleb B. Smith, of Indiana, who had, in his opinion, rendered him more effective service than any other public speaker."

This journey and visit by Lincoln to his stepmother has been so accurately and vividly recalled by the late James A. Connolly, a lawyer in Charleston at the time, that I feel I cannot consistently omit his account of the incident. It was carefully imparted to me one afternoon in his law office in Springfield, to which place Major Connolly had removed about ten years after the close of the Civil War. After describing how he emigrated from Ohio to Charleston, where he landed late in the fifties to begin the practice of law, he said:

"In the closing days of January, 1861, word came to Charleston that Mr. Lincoln was coming down from Springfield to pay a farewell visit to his aged stepmother at her home in the country. On hearing this I went down to the railroad station to witness his arrival, only to learn that he had failed to make connection with the regular passenger train at Mattoon and was therefore forced to come over from that place on the evening freight. We waited a long time and, when the train finally drew in and stopped, the locomotive was about opposite the station and the caboose, or car which carried the passengers, was some distance down the track. Presently, looking in that direction, we saw a tall man wearing a coat or shawl, descend from the steps of the car and patiently make his way through the long expanse of slush and ice beside the track as far as the station platform. I think he wore a plug hat. I remember I was surprised that a railroad company, with so distinguished a

passenger aboard its train as the President elect of the United States, did not manifest interest enough in his dignity and comfort to deliver him at the station instead of dropping him off in the mud several hundred feet down the track. In addition to myself quite a crowd of natives were gathered on the platform to see him. I confess I was not favorably impressed. His awkward, if not ungainly figure and his appearance generally, failed to attract me, but this was doubtless due to the fact that I was a great admirer of Douglas whose cause I had earnestly supported. There were no formalities. Mr. Lincoln shook hands with a number of persons, whom he recognized or who greeted him, and in a few minutes left for the residence of a friend, where, it was understood, he was to spend the night. On the way uptown from the station I was joined by Colonel A. P. Dunbar, an old lawyer, who told me that he intended to call on Mr. Lincoln at the residence where the latter was expected to spend the night, and invited me to accompany him. I accepted the invitation and later we walked out to the house together. We timed our call so as to meet Mr. Lincoln after he had eaten his supper. On the way I remember Dunbar expressed a doubt as to how he should approach or address Mr. Lincoln. He told me they were old friends and associates at the bar, but now, since Mr. Lincoln had risen in life and was President elect, Dunbar felt that he must keep within the proprieties of the occasion. There was therefore some question in his mind as to his own manner and behavior. He dared not betray any familiarity in addressing him for fear of offending good taste, and yet there had always been the greatest freedom in their intercourse with each other. Finally he announced that

his conduct would depend on Lincoln's attitude. 'If he is noticeably dignified and formal,' said Dunbar, 'I must act accordingly.'

"When we reached the house the family were still at the supper table, but Mr. Lincoln himself had withdrawn and was in the front room sitting before the fire. In response to our knock the door opened and who should step forward to greet us but Lincoln himself. Grasping Dunbar's outstretched palm with one hand and resting the other hand on his shoulder, he exclaimed in a burst of animation, 'Lord A'mighty, Aleck, how glad I am to see you!' That broke the spell; and if any stiffness or formality was intended it disappeared like magic. I was introduced and presently we were all sitting together and facing the fire. Lincoln did most of the talking. He was cheerful and communicative. After an exchange of ideas and recollections of the past with Dunbar, he was soon telling stories. Apparently there was a flood of them, one following another and each invariably funnier than its predecessor. It was a novel experience for me. I certainly never before heard anything like it. I shall never forget the one story which he had evidently reserved for the last, for he announced that it was the strangest and most amusing incident he had ever witnessed. I knew it would be interesting and was, therefore, all attention. It was about a girl whose duty it was to find and drive home the family cow. 'One day,' said Mr. Lincoln, 'she rode a horse bareback to the woods. On the way home the horse, frightened by a dog or something which darted from behind a bush, made a wild dash ahead, the girl still astride when suddenly —' at this point Mr. Lincoln halted a moment, for some one was knocking at the door. He stepped

across the room and opened it, when lo, there stood the Presbyterian preacher, his wife, and two other ladies. Of course Mr. Lincoln had to suspend his narrative. Meanwhile other callers arrived and in a short time the house began to fill with them, whereupon Dunbar and I decided to withdraw. As we made our way downtown Dunbar, well knowing what an admirer of Douglas I was inquired: 'Now that you have seen and heard the long-legged individual whom our friend Douglas defeated for Senator, what do you think of him?' I had to confess that he was a marvel — a charming story-teller and in other repects one of the most remarkable men I ever listened to. 'But he was guilty of one thing I shall never cease to regret,' I said, 'What was it?' he asked. 'He failed to relate the closing chapter of that last story,' I answered."

Meanwhile owing to the approaching meeting of the Legislature of Illinois and the need by that body of the room in the State House which Lincoln for some months had occupied as an office, the latter deemed it proper to vacate the premises and secure quarters elsewhere. Accordingly he accepted the offer of Mr. Joel Johnson and took up his abode in the second story of a building owned by the latter opposite the Chenery House, the leading hotel in the town. We are therefore reminded in the "Springfield Journal," February 4th, that "The present week being the last that Mr. Lincoln remains in Springfield, and it being indispensable that he should have a portion of the time to himself, he will see visitors only at his office No. 4 Johnson Building from 3.30 to 5.00 P.M. each day"; and thither, until the time was ripe for the inaugural journey to Washington, trudged the long line of weary pilgrims anxious to con-

gratulate or seek the favor of the President elect. It was during this period that Mr. Lincoln, betaking himself to an unfurnished room over his brother-in-law's store in Springfield, spent several days in the preparation of his Inaugural Address, the story of which is more minutely told in another chapter. But writing addresses and state papers was not the only thing that absorbed Mr. Lincoln's time, for one day early in February the local paper records that "Horace Greeley, returning from Jacksonville where he had lectured, had a three hours' interview with Mr. Lincoln and five Indianaians called to solicit a Cabinet position for the Hoosier State, three of them supporting the claims of Caleb Smith and two favoring Schuyler Colfax."

A day or two before his departure from Springfield in February, Lincoln climbed the unbanistered stairway leading to his law office on the west side of the Public Square for a final interview with Herndon. "I knew that Messrs. Lincoln and Herndon," is the testimony of Henry B. Rankin, a law student, "would prefer to talk alone, and so after Mr. Lincoln came in I left the office and sauntered below into Chatterton's jewelry store where I waited till they came down." For an account of what occurred or what was said when the two partners were alone we are indebted to Herndon.

"In the afternoon on one of his last days in Springfield," he relates, "Mr. Lincoln came down to our office to examine some papers and confer with me regarding the status of several lawsuits and certain other matters that concerned us both. Once or twice before he had intimated that he wanted to 'have a long talk' with me as he expressed it, but, until then, his visits to the office had been so brief and few

in number the desired interview had not taken place. On this occasion we examined our books and arranged for the settlement of all pending and unfinished matters. Going over the record of our business he noted some cases in which he was especially interested and in others certain lines of procedure he thought I should follow. These things disposed of he crossed to the opposite side of the room and lay down on the old office sofa or lounge for a few minutes, his gaze fastened on a certain spot near the ceiling as if in a brown study. Presently he inquired: 'Billy' — he always called me by that name — 'how long have we been together?' 'Over sixteen years,' I answered. 'We've never had a cross word during all that time, have we?' to which I returned an emphatic 'No, indeed.' He began to hark back to the past, recalling the adventures of earlier days, and including the recital of more than one amusing incident. My memory was also stimulated, and although he did most of the talking he still afforded me ample opportunity to recall some of the things to which, otherwise, I would not have alluded. He was never more entertaining and cheerful. At the conclusion of our talk he arose, gathered a bundle of papers, and started to leave, meanwhile suggesting that our partnership should continue indefinitely. 'Give our clients to understand,' he said, 'that the election of a President makes no change in the firm of Lincoln & Herndon; for if I live I'm coming back in due time and then we'll resume practice as if nothing had ever happened.' He paused a moment as if to take a last look at the old quarters and then passed through the door into the narrow hallway. I accompanied him downstairs where we separated. He was never in the office again."

Herndon's account of this meeting with Lincoln is verified by H. B. Rankin, the law student mentioned above. He testifies as follows: "The evening I saw Messrs. Lincoln and Herndon come down the stairs from their office, Mr. Lincoln had just told Herndon that he expected to return to Springfield when his term of office had ended and resume with him their law practice the same as if nothing had happened. He further requested Herndon to let the office sign remain and conduct business in the firm's name until his return, all of which was complied with; for, until the day the bullet of the assassin Booth had done its gruesome and atrocious work, the little sign, 'Lincoln & Herndon, Attorneys at Law,' was still swinging on its rusty hinges at the foot of the stairway."

One incident attending this interview between Lincoln and Herndon, and which was communicated to me by the latter when I collaborated with him, has thus far not been told. Herndon, unfortunately, had a decided and well-developed weakness for liquor, a habit which not only militated against his success as a lawyer, but seriously impaired his usefulness in other respects. The appetite which manifested itself at an early day gradually increased, the so-called sprees occurring at more frequent intervals as the days rolled by. Herndon, in the account which he gave me of this period of his life, including the story of his deplorable and bibulous habits, seemed to be anxious to reveal all the facts. Apparently he withheld nothing. In some respects it was a painful recital, but, having told everything, he appeared to experience more or less relief, much after the manner of the man who, being closeted with one of his closest friends, makes a clean breast of his

delinquency. He admitted that his conduct frequently was an embarrassment to Lincoln who was in every respect a total abstainer himself. "But although I have nothing to add in extenuation of my offense," he said, "I must insist that in his treatment of me Mr. Lincoln was the most generous, forbearing, and charitable man I ever knew. Often though I yielded to temptation he invariably refrained from joining in the popular denunciation which, though not unmerited, was so frequently heaped upon me. He never chided, never censured, never criticized my conduct — more than that, never, save on one occasion, alluded to it. That was the evening we were together in our office for the last time. It was near sunset. We had finished the details of our business and for a while were engaged in the exchange of reminiscences when suddenly, without rising from his seat, he blurted out: 'Billy, there's one thing I have, for some time, wanted you to tell me, but I reckon I ought to apologize for my nerve and curiosity in asking it even now. 'What is it?' I inquired. 'I want you to tell me,' he said, 'how many times you have been drunk.' It was, of course, a rather blunt inquiry, but unexpected though it was I realized that it came from an honest inquirer, one who had a right to the information, and I therefore answered it as promptly and definitely as the limited sources of knowledge at my command would warrant. Meanwhile I felt sure a lecture or moral admonition would follow and prepared myself accordingly, but much to my surprise nothing more was said by him on that subject. Instead he relieved my tension by describing the various efforts that had been made to induce him to drop me from the partnership and substitute certain others, whom he

named, all of which was a surprise to me. He assured me that he invariably declined the intervention of others and admonished those who sought to displace me that, despite my shortcomings, he believed in me and therefore would not desert me."

CHAPTER XX

Last social function at Lincoln's home — He receives threatening letters — Sends a friend to Washington to sound General Scott — General Thomas S. Mather returns with his report — Plans for Lincoln's journey to Washington as outlined in the local papers — Personnel of the party selected to accompany him — Leaving the Chenery House — His trunks — Departure from the railway station — Lincoln's farewell speech — Story of the two versions — His emotion when the train moved off.

THE social status of the Lincolns during their last days in Illinois is well indicated by the following letter of a correspondent of the "Missouri Democrat" written at Springfield February 7, 1861:

The first levee given by the President-elect took place last evening at his own residence in this city and it was a grand outpouring of citizens and strangers together with the members of the legislature. Your humble servant was invited to attend. Mr. Lincoln threw open his house for a general reception of all the people who felt disposed to give him and his lady a parting call. The levee lasted from seven to twelve o'clock in the evening and the house was thronged by thousands up to the latest hour. Mr. Lincoln received the guests as they entered and were made known. They then passed on and were introduced to Mrs. Lincoln, who stood near the center of the parlor, and who, I must say, acquitted herself most gracefully and admirably. She was dressed plainly but richly. She wore a beautiful full trail, white moire antique silk, with a small French lace collar. Her neck was ornamented with a string of pearls. Her head-dress was a simple and delicate vine arranged with much taste. She displayed but little jewelry and this was well and appropriately adjusted. She is a lady of fine figure and accomplished address and is well calculated to grace and to do honor at the White House.

She was on this occasion accompanied by four of her sisters — Mrs. W. S. Wallace, Mrs. C. M. Smith, of Springfield, Mrs. Charles Kellogg, of Cincinnati, and a Miss Todd, of Kentucky. They all appeared to be extremely happy and I hope there will be

nothing thrown in their way to hinder them from experiencing in full all the pleasures which they now anticipate in coming events. I thought, when looking upon the lovely group of the Todd family, how proud old Kentucky would have felt if she could have been present to witness the position in which her son and daughters were placed.

T. W.

This was the last social function or gathering at Lincoln's home; for preparations even then were under way looking to his departure from Springfield.

Meanwhile, at this time and for a few weeks prior thereto Lincoln was in receipt of numerous notes and letters threatening his life in case he undertook the journey to Washington to be inaugurated. At first he paid no attention to them, but they so increased in violence and numbers that he finally concluded he could no longer ignore them. He, therefore, decided to send the late Thomas S. Mather, Adjutant-General of Illinois, to Washington commissioned to inquire into the military situation and especially to call on General Scott, apprise him of the threats the President elect had been receiving, and learn what, if any, precautions would be taken to protect the latter when he came to be inaugurated.

I knew General Mather well, and when I was in Springfield often heard him relate the incidents of his trip to Washington. The diary of Major E. D. Keyes, who was General Scott's military secretary, fixes January 29, 1861, as the date of his visit. He said that Lincoln more than all else seemed to be concerned regarding Scott's loyalty, anxious to learn if he was unreservedly for the Union — in short, if, in every emergency that might arise, he could be depended upon. "That," related General Mather,

"seemed to be Lincoln's chief concern. Senator Seward, Mr. Washburn, and others had certified to General Scott's loyalty and high character, and the General himself had written to the President elect offering his services without reserve. 'But he is a Virginian,' explained Mr. Lincoln, 'and while I have no reason or evidence to warrant me in questioning him or his motives, still I shall feel better satisfied if you will visit him in my behalf. When you call insist on a personal interview and do not leave till you have seen and sounded him. Listen to and look him in the face. Note carefully what he says, and when you return with your report I shall probably be in a condition to determine about where he stands and what to expect of him.'"

General Mather further related that when he reached Washington General Scott was sick and confined to his bed so that he did not succeed in gaining access to him till two days later. He thus describes the interview: "Presently I was invited upstairs into the sick man's chamber. There propped up in bed by an embankment of pillows lay the hero of Lundy's Lane, wrinkled and pale. His hair and beard were disordered and his flesh lay in rolls across his warty face and neck. His breathing was labored and difficult. 'You may present my compliments to Mr. Lincoln when you reach Springfield,' he said in a wheezy voice, 'and tell him I shall expect him to come on to Washington as soon as he is ready. Say to him also that, when once here, I shall consider myself responsible for his safety. If necessary I'll plant cannon at both ends of Pennsylvania Avenue, and if any of the Maryland or Virginia gentlemen who have been so threatening and troublesome of late

show their hands or even venture to raise a finger, I'll blow them to the infernal regions.' I shall never forget the scene nor how profoundly the old soldier seemed to be wrought up. His trembling frame betokened his unequivocal and righteous indignation at the perfidy of those of his countrymen who were so willing to destroy the Union which he had fought so long and ardently to maintain.

"In due time I reached Springfield and promptly made my report to Mr. Lincoln. He was anxious to hear it. Of General Scott's rigid determination and unswerving loyalty I assured him there was no question whatever; all of which seemed to be the most gratifying information. It allayed all doubt that may have found lodgment in his mind; for, thenceforward, the local situation in Washington gave him no further concern and he went ahead with his preparations for the inaugural journey."

The story of the departure from Springfield and the journey to Washington has in nowise been overlooked by Lincoln's numerous biographers, but it will not be considered a repetition, I hope, if I add a few things, gleaned from the local papers or from certain Springfield people whom I interviewed, and which have thus far not reached the public eye. It is recorded that he left Springfield Monday, February 11, 1861. The next day was his fifty-second birthday. Having shortly before leased his residence to Mr. L. Tilton, the president of the Great Western Railroad, he disposed of his furniture and removed with his family to the Chenery House, the leading hotel in the city where, for a few days, he occupied rooms on the second floor facing Fourth Street.



Robert Lincoln, the oldest son [reports the "Springfield Register"], came home from college to accompany the family to Washington. During Mr. Lincoln's sojourn at the hotel he had been visited by many men of prominence whom he had summoned for conferences on national affairs. The complete absence of ostentation and his physical self-reliance was illustrated on the morning of his departure when in the hotel office he roped his trunks with his own hands, took some of the hotel cards, on the back of which he wrote:

A. Lincoln
White House
Washington, D.C.—

and tacked them on the trunks, supplementing the act by writing his autograph on another card and giving it to the landlord's daughter. In due time the omnibus backed up in front of the hotel and he left for the depot.

The special train which is to bear Mr. Lincoln to Washington [is the comment of the "Springfield Journal" in its issue of February 11th] will start this morning at eight from the Great Western Railroad depot. It will be under charge of Mr. W. S. Wood from New York whose arrangements both for the comfort and the safety of the President elect are perfect and prove his managerial capacity to be of the highest order. The party numbers about fifteen persons besides special reporters for the leading newspapers. The train consists of one passenger and one baggage car drawn by a magnificent Rogers locomotive under the special direction of Messrs. Tilton and Bowen, the president and superintendent respectively of the road. Every precaution has been taken for the safety of the train. It will be flagged through — a pilot engine preceding — and under the direction of Mr. J. J. S. Wilson, Superintendent of the Telegraph, will be telegraphed from station to station and retelegraphed to headquarters as it passes. The speed will be about thirty miles per hour.

According to the original plans Mrs. Lincoln and the younger sons, William and Thomas or Tad, were to linger a few days in Springfield, or go to St. Louis for a brief stay and overtake the President elect at some point in the East,

thus avoiding the slow and tedious journey through Indiana, Ohio, and New York. Her husband and eldest son Robert, then an undergraduate at Harvard, who had returned from the East a few days before, accordingly left Springfield in the morning without her; but, later in the day, she decided to leave for Indianapolis, nevertheless. She reached that place and rejoined her husband the next morning shortly before the special train departed thence for Cincinnati, her change of mind being due, it is said, to word from General Scott who thought Lincoln would be in less danger, if during his journey he was surrounded by his family. Regarding this change of programme I have been permitted to copy letters from two residents of Springfield each written the day after Lincoln's departure. In one the writer says:

> Mrs. Lincoln was not to leave for some days after Mr. Lincoln's departure, but a dispatch from General Scott determined her to leave the evening of the same day. The General thought it would be safer for him to be surrounded by his family. Lockwood Todd was her escort.

In the other letter, after describing the scene at the railroad station when Lincoln made his farewell speech, the writer adds:

> Mrs. Lincoln left here last evening to overtake her husband at Indianapolis at the suggestion of General Scott.

General Scott had detailed two army officers in the persons of Major David Hunter and Colonel E. V. Sumner to accompany Lincoln from Springfield to his destination. Sumner failed to report in time, but joined the special train at Indianapolis. These officers, along with Ward H. Lamon, of Danville, Illinois, who was an aide on the staff



of Governor Yates, and Elmer Ellsworth, colonel of a Chicago Zouave regiment, constituted the military portion of the cortège. Dr. William S. Wallace, Mr. Lincoln's brother-in-law, was the physician. Besides those named, and the President elect and his son Robert, the following composed the party: John G. Nicolay and John Hay, secretaries, N. B. Judd, O. H. Browning, David Davis, Jesse K. Dubois, Ebenezer Peck, Robert Irwin, Edward L. Baker, and George C. Latham.

Long before the hour appointed for the departure of the special train provided for Mr. Lincoln and his suite [observes the "Springfield Journal" — February 12th] hundreds of his fellow citizens without distinction of party assembled at the station of the Great Western Railway yesterday to tender him their respects, grasp once more that honest hand and bid him God-speed on his eventful journey. A subdued and respectful demeanor characterized the vast assemblage. All seemed to feel that they were about to witness an event which, in its relations to the future, was of no ordinary interest.

Mr. Herndon was not at the railway station when Lincoln departed, but I have talked to others, including John G. Nicolay, John W. Bunn, and David Davis, who were there. Although early in the morning and the weather unpleasant, a goodly crowd had gathered.

Early Monday morning [relate Nicolay and Hay] found Mr. Lincoln, his family and suite at the dingy little railroad station with a throng of at least a thousand of his neighbors who had come to bid him good-bye. It was a stormy morning, which seemed to add gloom and depression to their spirits. The leave-taking presented a scene of subdued anxiety, almost of solemnity. Mr. Lincoln took a position in the waiting-room where his friends filed past him after merely pressing his hand in silent emotion.

At precisely five minutes before eight [says the "Springfield

Journal"] Mr. Lincoln, preceded by Mr. Wood of New York, slowly made his way from his room in the station, through the expectant masses which respectfully parted right and left at his approach, to the car provided for his ride. At each step of his progress friendly hands were extended for a last greeting. On reaching the platform of the car Mr. Lincoln turned toward the people, removed his hat, paused for several seconds till he could control his emotions and then slowly, impressively, and with profound emotion uttered the following words:

"Friends, no one who has never been placed in a like position can understand my feelings at this hour nor the oppressive sadness I feel at this parting. For more than a quarter of a century I have lived among you, and during all that time I have received nothing but kindness at your hands. Here I have lived from my youth till now I am an old man. Here the most sacred trusts of earth were assumed; here all my children were born; and here one of them lies buried. To you, dear friends, I owe all that I have, all that I am. All the strange checkered past seems to crowd now upon my mind. To-day I leave you; I go to assume a task more difficult than that which devolved upon General Washington. Unless the great God who assisted him shall be with and aid me, I must fail. But if the same omniscient mind and the same Almighty arm that directed and protected him shall guide and support me, I shall not fail; I shall succeed. Let us all pray that the God of our fathers may not forsake us now. To Him I commend you all — permit me to ask that with equal sincerity and faith you will all invoke His wisdom and guidance for me. With these few words I must leave you — for how long I know not. Friends, one and all, I must now bid you an affectionate farewell."

The half-finished ceremony was broken in upon [relate Nicolay and Hay] by the ringing bells and rushing train. The crowd closed about the railroad car into which the President-elect and his party made their way. Then came the central incident of the morning. The bell gave notice of the starting, but as the conductor paused with his hand uplifted to the bell-rope Mr. Lincoln appeared on the platform of the car and raised his hand to command attention. The bystanders bared their heads to the falling snowflakes and, standing thus, his neighbors heard his voice for the

last time in the city of his home in a farewell address so chaste and pathetic that it reads as if he already felt the tragic shadow of forecasting fate:

"My friends: No one not in my situation can appreciate my feeling of sadness at this parting. To this place and the kindness of these people I owe everything. Here I have lived a quarter of a century and have passed from a young to an old man. Here my children have been born and buried. I now leave not knowing when or whether I may return, with a task before me greater than that which rested upon Washington. Without the assistance of that Divine Being who ever attended him, I cannot succeed. With that assistance, I cannot fail. Trusting in Him who can go with me and remain with you and be everywhere for good, let us confidently hope that all will yet be well. To his care commending you, as I hope in your prayers you will commend me, I bid you an affectionate farewell."

The speech of Lincoln on this occasion was published on the day of its delivery in the "Springfield Journal" and also in the "Chicago Tribune." Although both versions were substantially alike, there was just enough variation to occasion among those who are divided on the subject of Lincoln's belief in Christianity, his religious faith or lack of it, a difference of opinion as to what he actually said. Several years ago, when I visited John G. Nicolay at his home in Washington, the matter of Lincoln's farewell address at Springfield came up for discussion. Mr. Nicolay related that on the day before Lincoln departed he caused the newspaper correspondents gathered about the hotels to be notified that nothing warranting their attention would take place at the railroad station when he embarked on his journey; in other words, that speech-making, so far as he was concerned, would not begin till after he had left Springfield. But the next morning when he looked into

the faces of the neighbors gathered about his car he forgot the assurances to the newspaper men made the night before and indulged in a brief but appropriate farewell speech. The moment the train steamed out of Springfield the newspaper men, one of them being the late Henry Villard, gathered about Lincoln and asked him to furnish them with a copy of his speech; reminding him that they were given no chance to take it down as delivered. He answered that his remarks were extempore and therefore not in manuscript form, but he assured them that he would write the speech in full. He therefore beckoned to Nicolay, who provided paper and pencil, and he proceeded to comply with the request. He penciled a few lines, then halted and turned the paper over to Nicolay, who began writing where he left off, Lincoln meanwhile dictating to him. Presently at his request Nicolay returned the paper to him and he resumed the writing himself, but erelong, due to nervousness or the motion of the train, he desisted a second time and again invoked the aid of Nicolay, who continued the task, all of which verifies the statement that the farewell address at Springfield published in the "Century Magazine" in connection with the Nicolay and Hay "Life of Lincoln," was correctly printed from the original manuscript, having been written immediately after the train started, partly by Lincoln's own hand and partly by that of his private secretary from his dictation. When I visited Mr. Nicolay he showed me not only this manuscript, but a number of others also in Lincoln's handwriting, explaining that before he left Springfield Lincoln was so solicitous and careful regarding his utterances *en route* to Washington that he prepared and wrote out in advance such speeches as he

expected to make. The manuscripts were enclosed in separate envelopes and properly labeled. Knowing that I was a native of Indiana he withdrew from a package one envelope and turned it over to me to peruse. On it Lincoln had endorsed "For Indianapolis." It proved to be the manuscript of the speech intended for delivery to the Legislature of Indiana containing his definition of coercion and invasion, and a brief but ingenious dissertation on the sacredness of a State. I read it with the deepest interest.

As a rule Lincoln was well poised. He could not be called cold, but in the delivery of a speech or on public occasions he was dignified if not invariably serious; the result was that he never bubbled over — rarely ever wept or otherwise betrayed his emotion. That condition, however, did not prevail the morning he separated from his friends and neighbors in February, 1861, headed for Washington. On that occasion he was deeply moved. My authority for that statement comes from an intimate friend of Lincoln, James C. Conkling, a man in whom Lincoln reposed the fullest confidence and who stood within a few feet and immediately in front of him when he bade his neighbors farewell from the platform of his car. The testimony is in the handwriting of Mr. Conkling himself. Describing the incident, he says:

> It was quite affecting. Many eyes were filled to overflowing as Mr. Lincoln uttered those few and simple words of farewell. His own breast heaved with emotion and he could scarcely command his feelings sufficiently to commence. There was scarcely a dry eye in all that vast crowd.

The following, which is the farewell incident as de-

scribed in the "Springfield Journal," was the work of the editor Edward L. Baker:

It was a most impressive scene. We have known Mr. Lincoln for many years; we have heard him speak upon a hundred different occasions; but we never saw him so profoundly affected, nor did he ever utter an address which seemed to us so full of simple and touching eloquence, so exactly adapted to the occasion, so worthy of the man and the hour. Although it was raining fast when he began to speak, every hat was lifted and every head bent forward to catch the last words of the departing chief. When he said, with the earnestness of a sudden inspiration of feeling, that with God's help he should not fail, there was an uncontrollable burst of applause. At precisely eight o'clock city time the train moved off bearing our honored townsman, our noble chief, Abraham Lincoln, to the scenes of his future labors and, as we firmly believe, of his glorious triumph. God bless honest Abraham Lincoln!

In the closing days of January the following advertisement had appeared in the columns of the "Springfield Journal":

AT PRIVATE SALE

The furniture consisting of Parlor and Chamber Sets, Carpets, Sofas, Chairs, Wardrobes, Bureaus, Bedsteads, Stoves, China, Queensware, Glass etc. at the residence on the corner of Eighth and Jackson streets is offered at private sale without reserve. For particulars apply at the premises at once.

In the issue of March came this notice:

The notes and papers of Mr. Lincoln are left with Mr. Robert Irwin where persons interested can find them. If any of the accounts are left unpaid Mr. Irwin will pay them on being satisfied of their correctness.

A. LINCOLN

THE END



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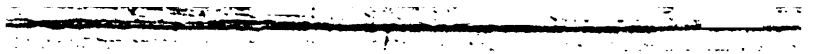
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